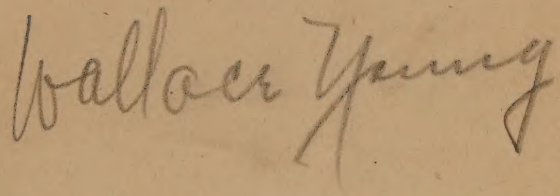
FOR OLD DONCHESTER

·ARTHUR·· DUFFEY·



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Archie Hartley and His Schoolmates

THERE WAS A REST DURING WHICH THE TRAINER GAVE A LITTLE TALK TO THE RUNNERS.—*Page 199.*

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OR

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BY

ARTHUR DUFFEY

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN GOSS

BOSTON
LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD CO.

Published, August, 1912

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For Old Donchester

Norwood Press
BERWICK & SMITH CO.
NORWOOD, MASS.
U. S. A.

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FOR OLD DONCHESTER

OR

ARCHIE HARTLEY AND HIS SCHOOL-MATES

CHAPTER I

The Christmas holidays were over, and the train on which Archie Hartley was a passenger, was making good time in the direction of Donchester and its preparatory school. That the boy's feelings were, under the circumstances, of a somewhat mixed nature was hardly to be wondered at. The remembrance of the jolly times that had just ended; of his loving parents and Uncle Horace; of the score of relatives and friends to whom he had bidden choky goodbyes the night before and during the morning; of his furred and feathered pets, and the knowledge that six months must pass before he could visit all these and his home again brought the lump to his throat and the blur to his eyes, as he turned his face to the window so that his neighboring passenger shouldn't see that he

was sniveling. Yet in the midst of this spasm of homesickness would come thoughts of the fun and schoolboy chums that awaited him at the end of his journey, and from these he took much comfort. Archie was also a bit of a philosopher, which fact enabled him manfully to face things that there was no avoiding. His father had taught him, too, that a trouble or unpleasantness is never as big as it seems to be when you are trying to dodge it. Thus, when the panes are covered with lace of Jack Frost's making, the thought of the morning "tub" isn't always agreeable, but after you've taken the dip and the rough towel gets to work, isn't the glow glorious, and don't you wonder why you ever dreaded the cool water? It is the same with lots of little worriments that you'll encounter through life, boys, and when you've met and overcome them, the glow of duty performed is very pleasant indeed.

So Archie, when the tugging at his heartstrings became too insistent, with an effort turned his thoughts away from what had been to what was to be, and gathered much consolation from the process. He was helped in so doing by a consideration of the rack overhead where lay his hand-bag. This contained among other things, a pair of fine racing skates, the gift of Uncle Horace. On top of the bag was

a split bamboo fishing-rod that his father, on hearing of the Broad, had bought for him, and the multiplying reel that went with it, was the gift of his mother.

And then, in his fob pocket, was his new watch—a substantial silver hunter, the first that he had ever owned and of which he was correspondingly proud. Now the tale of how it became his is this: after he and his chum, Mackay, had saved Snaggy from drowning, as has been told in the first book of this series, Dr. Pardee, the head of the school faculty, wrote a letter to Mr. Hartley in which he congratulated the latter on having a son whose bravery was equaled by his modesty.

"And I am assured, my dear sir," wrote the Doctor, "that a parent who has succeeded in coincidentally inculcating those two admirable qualities in the nature of his offspring, will not allow of an interference with their balance by deserved but unwise laudation on the part of Archie's friends or admirers."

This showed that Dr. Pardee was a wise man, even if he did use four-syllabled words when those of one or two would have sufficed.

Now, while Mr. Hartley appreciated the advice of the Head, he would have done precisely as the latter suggested without prompting. He knew that "big-head" is likely to attack any-

body who suddenly finds that he is the center of a storm of applause. And the younger the person so praised, the more liable is he to contract the malady of "hydro" to use the Donchester phrase. The only thing to prevent the attack is by checking the conditions that are likely to bring it on. So when the Doctor's communication was followed by Archie's weekly letter that, among other things, stated that a couple of chumps had upset their canoe and Mackay and the writer had pulled them out of the water, Dad wrote a brief and jocular reply in which he said nothing about the heroic end of the incident, but something to the effect that he was glad that he had a son who could dive so well that he could "haul snags from a lake bottom." Also he asked the people who were to meet Archie on his home-coming, to say little or nothing about the plucky action of his boy. This request they honored, or nearly so.

Two days before Christmas, came a letter and a package addressed to Archie at his home. And they were from Harper, who wrote the one and sent the other in behalf of the athletic committee of the school. The letter said that the committee wanted to show its appreciation of the boy's courage by asking his acceptance of the watch that was in the package. On the inside of the face-case of the watch was the

inscription: "To Archibald Jefferson Hartley, in remembrance of October 20th, 19.., from the D. P. S. A. C."

This was the date on which Archie dived into the Broad for Snaggy.

Naturally, therefore, he was proud of the timepiece. But—and this is between you and the author—it isn't believed that he thought *quite as much* of it as he did of a little gold charm with a Greek inscription in green enamel, that hung from his fob chain. It was a comfort and a help to him on many occasions, was that charm. In common with all of us, Archie was sometimes confronted with the temptation to neglect the right or do the wrong thing because the latter was easier. And at such times, the motto on the trinket, "Speed ye in all things excellent," would occur to him, and he invariably heeded the admonition. Perhaps he did so for the sake of the donor of the charm—little Mildred; or because he had a sturdy conscience. But, anyhow, and especially in the days of his young manhood, he often blessed the dear little maiden for her gift and the resolution to do right with which it seemed to endow him.

Other things in the bag that Archie would have hated to confess that he valued more than he could say, and that would have turned his

face to a beet-red had you merely mentioned them, were a couple of letters written in a childish hand and couched in formal language that told of their being dictated by a grown-up. They were from Mildred, the little daughter of Professor Ridgeley of the faculty and even if they did begin, "Dear Master Hartley," and end, "Yours sincerely," they were to their recipient, literary compositions of the highest order. One of them contained a sprig of mistletoe, the twain berries of which had gotten smashed in the mail and had spread stickily and blurringly over the written matter. Now, he wasn't a sentimental youngster by any means, but he kept that withered stalk and leaves and the remnants of the berries until, like the "One Hoss Shay," they literally crumbled into nothingness by reason of their age. A sincere, earnest nature, such as Archie's was, is as true to the tokens of an affection as it is to the affection itself. Hence the reason that he treasured the letters and the mistletoe twig.

Then, too, he had received a butterfly net, and a field-glass, the donors being a couple of maiden aunts who loved nature-study, and wished to cultivate a taste for it in their nephew. A film camera of good make with a fixed focus lens was the gift of an elder cousin, who was somewhat of a photographic enthusiast

and wanted Archie to be likewise. Still another cousin had presented him with an electric flash-light—one of those contrivances by which you can produce a flood of illumination by touching a switch. And there were other things dear to the boyish heart in that bag, each of which went a long way towards helping Archie to overcome his touches of homesickness.

Four stations from Donchester, a half-dozen of his schoolmates boarded the train and were boisterously glad to see him. At the next stop, more Donchesterians joined the merry crowd, and then somebody started the school song, in which all hands joined, the clear boyish voices sounding very sweet as they pealed forth the verses. Shakespeare might have written, "One touch of schoolboy nature makes the whole world kin," instead of what he did write; and the way that the elders on that car behaved as they listened to the song, would have vindicated his so doing. The women's faces brightened as they regarded the lads with that delight that springs from the mother-love in every feminine heart. The men looked their interest and approval, and some sighed a trifle as if remembering that their boyhood days were over and that with them had vanished many of the hopes and aspirations and ambitions of early youth. One old fellow who wore a white mus-

tache and a G. A. R. button, passed his hand over his eyes and said softly:

"Sing on, my boys, sing on! These are the happiest days of your lives."

And when the voices ceased chanting the praises of Alma Mater, strangers turned to each other in friendly fashion and smiled, and commented on the song and the singers, and in other ways gave evidence of the truth of the Immortal Bard's saying, and the fact that it only needs but little to bring to the surface the kinship of us all.

Not long after the last chorus had been sung, the train drew into Donchester, and Archie and the others piled into an awaiting 'bus and began the trip towards the hill, on the top of which the impressive school buildings seemed to be extending a cheery welcome to the party.

CHAPTER II

Archie had reported his return to the monitor of the day in accordance with Donchester custom; had been greeted, cheered, clapped on the back, and had his hand shaken by scores of his friends; had hunted up or been hunted by his special chums, including Mackay and Parrot—Curtis having not yet gotten back from Kansas—and, as it was near one o'clock, had made a dash for his room in order to prepare for lunch.

"Well, champ," said Mackay, who had followed, as he fairly beamed on Archie, "glad to get back to Don. and the grind?"

"Indeed I am, old chap. Felt rather bad at leaving Dad and the Mater and the rest of the folks of course, but now I'm here, I'm all right."

And then the boys fell to showing each other their Christmas presents, during which Archie emptied that bag of his, but did not feel called on to exhibit Mildred's letters. Among other things, he produced his watch, whereupon Mackay with a grin, showed a pair of handsome sleeve-links that had been sent him by the athletic committee on the score of the Snaggy inci-

dent. At this Archie felt very glad indeed, for, to tell the truth, he was rather afraid that Mackay might feel hurt at Harper's action in regard to the watch. Next, the lads began telling what had happened to each of them during the holidays, and Mackay was in the act of relating how he had broken through while skating and had kept his head above water by gripping the edge of the ice until a friend crawled out shoving a board before him, when the lunch bell rang.

"Stomach before stories any time," said Mackay as he brought his adventure to an abrupt end and rose, even before the bell had ceased pealing.

Archie laughed. "It's stomach before anything with you, Mac," said he. "But I'm with you. That ride in the cars has made me as hungry as one of Curtis's coyotes."

Near the hall, they overtook Evans whom neither of them had yet seen. He seemed glad to meet them, but it was plain that he wasn't quite at his ease. The truth was that the boy's conscience had been awakened by the happenings on the day of the try-outs, as told in the first book, and he now saw himself as he felt he must have then appeared to Archie and the latter's friends. In consequence, he was ashamed and self-condemned, which, if he had

only known it, was a good thing for him. To see yourself as others see you, is the beginning of wisdom, you know.

As he entered the noble hall, took his accustomed seat, saw familiar faces around him and listened to the grave and gentle voice of Dr. Pardee saying grace, it was hard for Archie to realize that only six hours before he had been swallowing a hasty breakfast at home, preparatory to catching an early train. The last traces of homesickness disappeared in the presence of the Alma Mater spirit that his surroundings conjured into being.

Much to his disappointment, the Ridgeleys were not in the faculty seats. They had been spending the vacation with friends, so he later learned, and were not expected back before the evening. The truth was that opening day was such in name only for both the faculty and the boys. This was a wise measure, as neither the one nor the other were quite fit to rule or be ruled immediately after the relaxation of a holiday.

And so, lunch being over, the chums made their way out to the bright, snappy air of the campus where both joined in the fun and "clink," or chaffing, and received and gave greetings, and added their voices to the school song and helped out the school yell and slapped

minnies and did many other things in accordance with school traditions.

"Where is Snaggy?" said Archie suddenly. "Have you seen him around, Mac?"

"No. He wasn't at lunch, and so I guess that he hasn't got back yet, which means that he's likely to show up any time."

"I wonder how he'll treat the minnies this term," said Archie in a tone that showed that he hadn't forgotten his own experience at the hands of the bully.

Mackay stopped short and reflected. "That's a crackerjack thought of yours, sonny boy. We—you and I and Parrot and a few more of the fellows—will form a Vigilance Committee and keep tab on Snaggy and his crowd. If we see any of the bunch putting it over the new boys, why, they'll be sorry that they did so. I owe Snaggy a tuggle, anyhow, and this will be a mighty good chance to pay him."

"Tuggle," you know, was the Donchester expression meaning, "to fight with," to "thrash for a cause."

"I'm with you about looking after the new boys, but don't let's start trouble with Snaggy, if it can be helped. I'd hate to begin the half-term with a scrap."

"Look here, young 'un," replied Mackay, "there'll be no trouble or scrapping unless it

begins with the gent who is shy on teeth. So make your mind easy on that score. Now let's look up the rest of the Vigs that are to be." Pierce, was nicknamed "Snaggy" because he had some broken front teeth, or "snags."

In less than half an hour, a dozen or so boys, including Parrot had agreed to keep watch and word on Snaggy, O'Brien, Blobs, *et al.*, to see if these latter broke the unwritten laws relative to "ragging" new boys. And the Vigilantes, as Mackay insisted on calling them, had scarcely finished making their plans and preparations, when a 'bus unloaded its cargo of youngsters at the gates of the school grounds, Curtis and Snaggy being among them.

"I'm certain glad to see you-all again," said the former as he was noisily hailed by the group, "but I'm sure longing to wipe off the dust of Kansas and some other States that's holding to me like sage-brush to a tumble-bush. See you later." And away he went in the direction of his room.

"Howdy, Snaggy!" sung out Archie to the former, who had lingered behind to haul out a parcel from beneath the driver's seat.

It wasn't a pleasant sort of glance that Pierce shot at our hero, but noting that the others were waiting to hear what sort of an answer he would make, he forced a vinegary smile and

replied that he was all right, and he hoped Archie was also.

"Fit as a fiddle," responded Archie, glad that Snaggy was even grumpily civil. "What are you—" But the latter with a curt and inclusive nod to all, was already on his way.

"Master Pierce is stingy when it comes to manners," commented Parrot. "He might have waited until Hartley had finished dangling the olive branch before he padded his hoof, which, my young friends, was the ancient Roman vernacular for beating it; getting a move on, chasing yourself, and so forth."

Parrot, as he pronounced the last sentence, gave so close an imitation of Dr. Pardee's lecture voice and gestures, that his audience howled with laughter.

"Archie makes me tired sometimes," grumbled Mackay. "He carries this olive-branch business too far. What's the use of trying to be decent with a fellow, who simply refuses to meet you? You can't beat dust out of a rug with a sugar-stick; you want to use a four-foot club. Same with Snaggy and his kind. To make him a clean sort you have to lick him, and lick him good."

"And plenty," chimed in Curtis who had joined the group unseen.

"Thank you," went on the unruffled Mackay

—"and plenty, if not with your fists, with—with—"

"With or by moral suasion," broke in Parrot, "such as the snub direct; the cut dead; sending to coventry; ostracizing; rusticating; blackballing; proscribing; outlawing; making him a derelict or an outcast—"

"Or by obliging him to listen to your jaw," interrupted Mackay rudely.

Parrot bowed his acknowledgments and again there was a chorus of laughter.

"Snaggs got on the train at Burstown," began Curtis, "and after smiling at me as pleasant as a bear cub who's got a tummy ache by feeding in an orchard in green-apple time, hauls a minny out of a window seat, takes it himself, looks around with a kind of 'what-are-you-going-to-do-about-it?' air, and lights a cigarette, it not being a smoking-car. Seeing that I am some tired and so disinclined to smite Snaggy where he puts his coffin-nail, I wait until the conductor comes around and then lay complaint against the cigarette and its owner. Whereupon, the conductor, who is of a sour disposition unless his face libels him, orders Master Pierce into the smoker and as he goes there scowling, I sure request the minny to take the window seat again and to yell to me if anybody serves eviction papers on him. Which nobody

did; Snaggy keeping in the smoker all the rest of the way. My vote is that we cut Snaggy dead from now on forever. I have spoken, my brothers. Wah!"

"That's all right, but you've got to be sure that a chap is mean clear through, before you act as if he were," spoke up Archie. "I'm not stuck on Snaggy one bit. But what's the good of roughing him all the time if there's a chance of making him white by acting friendly?"

"It occurs to me that you acted some friendly when you fished him out of the Broad," drawled Curtis. "But I haven't noticed much whitewash on his conduct subsequent and in consequence."

Archie was about to open his mouth in reply, when Mackay broke in with, "Oh, let's drop Snaggy and all his works. I'm tired of hearing about him. Talk about something else."

"For the love of pink popcorn! What's that?" cried Parrot, pointing to the gates. The omnibus that on school-opening days met certain of the trains, had just arrived, and was disgorging its load of young humanity, among which was a boy who towered head and shoulders above those who surrounded him, and whose shoulders and limbs were broad in proportion to his height.

"This will bear investigation," croaked Par-

rot; "come along, fellows, and let's see the meaning of the prodigy that the gods have sent us."

As has been said elsewhere, Parrot was strong on mythology and had the habit of interlarding his speech with allusions thereunto.

CHAPTER III

The young giant, who stood over six feet in height, proved to be from Maine. He was fifteen years old, so he said. Andrew Chipp was his name, which of course prompted Mackay to ask if he was a chip of the old block. To this the huge youngster who seemed to be shy, even frightened, made no reply, but instead, looked helplessly on the curious crowd that surrounded him and didn't hesitate to express itself regarding his appearance. The remarks were friendly enough, but decidedly embarrassing to the youngster.

Chipp, in spite of his striking stature, had the face of a small boy, as far as its contour and expression were concerned. It was a pleasant face at that, round, fresh, and rosy, and Curtis looking on, or rather up at it, forthwith christened the owner the Cherub, which name stuck to him during his school days and long after.

Now an ordinary boy on his first day at school is apt to feel strange and uncomfortable. How much more uncomfortable, then, must a lad be, who physically, is very much out of the ordinary

and who is keenly conscious of the fact, as the big minny evidently was! So the Cherub stood there with the flushes chasing over his cheeks, his fingers twiddling nervously, and he, meanwhile, trying to look at ease, but failing miserably.

"Say, one of you fellows," said Archie in a low voice turning to the others, "why don't you look after him. If I was in the second I'd make him my minny and save him being clinked by the crowd."

Curtis stepped forward on the instant. "Here, little one," said he to Chipp, "come along and I'll take you to the monitor of the day. You have to report to him that you've arrived, you know. Then we'll come back and I'll make you acquainted with some of the fellows."

"Thank you, sir—" began the big boy.

"And say, you don't 'sir' anybody in Donchester except the faculty and the captains. My name's Curtis. Understand?"

The Cherub nodded meekly and the pair made for the monitor's office. Curtis looking like a small tug with a big ship in tow, as Parrot put it.

"I guess we're forgetting our manners—all but Archie," said Mackay after a pause and addressing the crowd of boys in general.

"Here we were rubbering at and guying that chap just because he has longer legs and more beef on him than the rest of us."

"And I guess you're right, Mac. Chipp must have a mighty poor opinion of Donchester if he judged us by the reception that you fellows gave him," answered Archie, warmly. One of the things that always irritated him was to see another made a butt of for unjust or thoughtless reasons.

"Objection to our conduct sustained," replied Mackay judicially. "But we'll try to make up for our rudeness to the Cherub in some way or the other. And the show being over, I think you chaps had better scatter. What?"

Most of the spectators took the hint, leaving the chums alone or nearly so.

Parrot suddenly came out of a reverie with a combined chuckle and grunt. By this the others knew that an idea worth listening to had struck him.

"Well?" queried Mackay.

"I was thinking what would happen to Snaggy if he tried to rough-rag Chipp and Chipp—fell—on him," explained Parrot wriggling with laughter.

"It wouldn't be a case of 'truth crushed to earth,' anyhow," ventured Archie.

"I honestly believe that that's the first time

I ever heard Hartley try to pull off a joke," said Parrot wickedly. "As a rule, he's too busy running or rescuing folks or trying to make friends with Snaggy to be real funny."

"If I had a parrot that talked as much as you do, I'd choke him," retorted Archie.

"Say, fellows, if the Cherub were only game, wouldn't it be a howling joke to put him up against Snaggy and let that dub take the consequence," broke in Mackay.

"The weighty consequence," added Parrot.

"He-ay! Here's Curtis and his little pet coming back now. Let's find out what sort of a chap Chipp is, and if he has sense enough to help put up a job on the public foe."

Curtis while on the way to and from the monitor's office, had given the minny a rapid-fire talk on the methods of the school regarding new boys, including the "ragging" that Chipp must expect, and the "slapping" that would be his if he came through the ordeal as became a good fellow. As a rule, an overgrown youngster is apt to be rather thick-headed. The new boy, however, was not exactly overgrown, for, as he explained later, his father and mother, sisters and brothers were all very tall, two of the latter standing 6 feet 4 inches in their stocking feet. So that instead of being a "freak," the Cherub came by his great stature by right of

birth. Hence his brain hadn't suffered by reason of his brawn, and Curtis's talk to him had been understood and appreciated.

Children and animals have a knack of sizing up strangers that is rarely at fault. So it didn't take very long for Archie and his chums to decide that Chipp was all right, or for the latter to come to the conclusion that he was among fellows who were inclined to be very friendly indeed. And then it was that Mackay turned the talk on the comedy in which Chipp and Snaggy were to play the principal parts, provided that the former was willing to do so.

Naturally the new boy hesitated before consenting. He wasn't exactly afraid of doing what the others wanted him to do, and he believed what they told him about Snaggy, and their reasons for desiring to make the latter look small, but he disliked, as a shy boy would, the attention to himself that the affair would be sure to excite. For Chipp was very sensitive of his abounding inches. However, on its being pointed out that he was bound to be ragged anyhow, and that Snaggy would be sure to take a hand in the process, he finally, if rather reluctantly, consented to help in the undoing of the bully.

"All you have to do," instructed Mackay

after some more talk on the subject, "is to stand for Snagg's ragging just as long as you like. Then all of a sudden put your arms around his neck and let yourself go—"

"If you could manage to fall on him, Cherub," suggested Curtis insinuatingly, "you might iron some of the mean creases out of him, you know. Don't hurt him. Just give him an imitation of a few tons of rock dropping on his neck."

Chipp grinned expansively. "At home, father and the rest of us do a lot of wrastling," he said in a voice that was ridiculously small and boyish in comparison with his bulk. "And I reckon I know how to take a fall out of another chap."

"Archie, that swipe on the mug that you handed Snaggy—" began Mackay.

"He means in English, the blow on the mouth that Hartley dealt Pierce," explained Parrot to the Cherub. "Sometimes Master Mackay drops into Esperanto, but you mustn't mind him."

"Oh, shut up!" said Mackay savagely. "I was saying that the events of this afternoon will probably put Archie's run-in with Snaggy on the blink."

"And I hope you understand what he means," added Parrot still addressing Cherub.

Archie, who hadn't been saying much but who was eyeing Chipp with friendly eyes, here asked the latter if he went in for any athletic sport outside of wrestling.

"I play a little football—we have a boy's club up home—and Dick, he's one of my brothers, taught me to throw the hammer. That's all," was the answer.

"And what happened to the other team when you played against it?" questioned Parrot, solemnly.

The Cherub looked uncomfortable. "Nothing very much. That is—they wouldn't let me play against them this season—said I was too heavy. We had one or two accidents last fall that they blamed on me."

"Accidents! It's a wonder there weren't sudden deaths when you bucked the line," cried Curtis.

"I just want you to all bear witness that I put myself on record as declaring that I resign if Chipp gets on the Junior eleven, and I'm lined up against him in a scrub game," said Mackay emphatically.

"There's Snaggy and some of his crowd coming across the campus now. Let's be ragging Chipp when he catches sight of us," suggested Archie.

"If you could manage to fall on him, Cherub, you might iron some of the mean creases out of him."—*Page 23.*

"That's a good idea. Get busy, boys," acquiesced Curtis.

And the Cherub, ringed about by the boys, was forthwith asked all sorts of unanswerable questions, was made to assume funny postures and do stunts of a varying sort, the crowd applauding vigorously in the meantime.

"Now," whispered Mackay when it was all over, as he helped the big boy on with his coat that had been turned inside out during the proceedings, "we're going to leave you, but we shall be handy in case Snaggy's crowd tries to go too far. He's been watching us and will have his turn with you when we clear out. Take whatever he does good-naturedly, *but be sure to fall on him.*"

The Cherub nodded and his eyes sparkled. He was entering into the spirit of the thing with a relish.

So Archie and the others walked away, apparently in search of more minnies, nor did they look back until they had reached the Founder's statue, at the other end of the campus. Then our hero, turning carelessly, saw that the expected had happened. Snaggy and his followers had surrounded the Cherub, who, towering above the other boys, was evidently being put through a "course of sprouts,"

judging by the laughter that every now and then came from the spectators.

"Shall we wait for the catastrophe or join the merry throng now?" asked Parrot.

"There's no reason why we shouldn't share in the fun right away," said Archie. "Come on, fellows," and the quartet made their way back to the crowd that was momentarily increasing in size. A minny of the dimensions of the Cherub was not "ragged" every opening day at Donchester.

Just as the chums reached the fringe of the spectators they heard the voice of Snaggy rasping out:

"Say, you whale, answer this: If a boy four feet high, swiped jam off a shelf twelve feet above the ground with the help of a six-foot chair that had three bum legs, what would happen?"

Now, nobody likes to have his physical peculiarities held up to ridicule, and so Chipp nearly lost his temper at the "whale," but remembering the advice given him, managed to keep himself under control.

"I think that there are two answers to that," he said in his high-pitched voice.

"Well, what are they, Behemoth?" snapped Snaggy who was at his element, baiting somebody whom he thought couldn't resent it.

"One answer is that he'd get licked if his mother caught him," shrilled the Cherub, whereat the crowd laughed and applauded.

"And what's the other answer, Elephant?" demanded Snaggy.

"The other?" said the boy, moving a step nearer to his inquisitor; "the other? Or that he might take a tumble like this!" and so saying he cast himself on the unprepared, threw his arms around the latter's neck and bore the latter and himself to the ground with a crash, taking care that he was on top at that. A howl of laughter mingled with hand-clapping and shouts of encouragement broke from the crowd that now pressed around the prostrate ones.

"Here's where I sure look after my minny," cried Curtis as, followed by the others, he wedged his way through the hilarious onlookers.

The pair were lying on the ground face to face with Snaggy undermost, his body almost hidden by the ponderous form of the Cherub. Every now or then an arm or leg of the former would obtain a momentary freedom and wave and kick wildly, while its owner poured out muffled threats and profanity at the cause of his predicament. Chipp, on his part, lay quite still, only shifting his body a trifle when Snaggy's wrigglings necessitated it. Once or twice

the big boy lay hold of the other's wrists and held them tight, when the would-be ragger tried to use his fists, a fact that added to the humor of the situation from the spectator's point of view. Snaggy being literally sat on by a minny and helpless under the process, was a spectacle of a unique and funny kind.

"It seems to me that the whale's got the better of Jonah," said Archie as he eyed the struggling couple.

"And Jonah is trying to chuck up the whale instead of the other way about," added Mackay.

This brought laughter from everybody.

And now, some of the Snaggy crowd including Blobs, "Skiddy" O'Brien, Malty, and others advanced toward the Cherub and his victim with the manifest intention of helping the latter out of his plight. Their action was anticipated by Curtis, however.

"The large and plenty gent is my minny," said he, addressing O'Brien, who was leading the rescue party, "and I don't propose that he shall be disturbed if he's some comfortable using Snaggy as a mattress. Snaggy bid for what he's getting, and he's getting it good. So don't interfere, little boy. Run away and play crab."

This latter remark was in allusion to the peculiar gait of O'Brien and the hilarious shout

that followed, proved that the audience understood.

"Tell your minny to quit; he's had Snaggy down long enough," said O'Brien, scowling as he spoke.

"That depends upon what the minny thinks about it—not you," broke in Mackay aggressively.

"And try to look pleasant when you ask a favor, Skiddy dear," suggested Parrot. "Those frowns disguise your beauty—if you ever had any."

Just what would have followed is hard to say, if at this juncture the Cherub hadn't looked up at Curtis and asked, "Shall I get up?"

"That depends on how you feel," answered Curtis. "If Snaggy's too bony to be easy lying, I certain wouldn't make dents on myself any longer than I wanted to."

In an instant Chipp was on his feet, and obeying a generous impulse, held out his hand to Snaggy to help him rise. But the latter struck it aside with an oath, rose, dusted off his clothes, and joining his followers, thrust his way through the jeering throng.

"You don't seem to have luck with your ragging," cried Mackay as a parting shot. The reference to Snaggy's experience with Archie and the Cherub struck home. The bully turned

and yelled a filthy remark. Mackay's face flamed and he started to go after his insulter hot-footed when Archie caught him by the arm.

"Not now, Mac. Don't get up a scrap on the campus the first day back. Plenty of time ahead to 'tuggle' Snaggy. But let it go now; remember the minnies."

The other quieted down forthwith. "You're right, Arch. But that fellow made me red-rag clear through and I forgot myself—but I won't forget him."

Archie's allusion to the minnies had to do with one of the school traditions which was, that outside of good-natured "ragging" or hazing, the new boys on the opening day of a term or half-term, were to be well treated, and nothing was to be done in their presence that might give them an unfavorable or mistaken impression of Donchester. Especially was fighting or quarreling forbidden at such times. Hence our hero's remonstrance.

CHAPTER IV

"You covered yourself with glory, Cherub," began Curtis when he and the others had gotten his charge away from the throng.

"And he covered Snaggy with himself," interjected Parrot. "Oh, what a fall was there, my countrymen! My! I expected to see Snaggy flatten out like a kippered herring."

Chipp giggled, but said nothing.

"If he tries to make trouble for you at any time, let us know and we'll take the castors off him." This came from Mackay.

"Which being translated means—" began Parrot, whereat the others threw their caps at him and stopped the threatened flow of "clink."

"I think that Chipp had better cut loose from us for a while," said Archie. "It may be the other fellows will believe that he's afraid to go it alone."

"You sure have thinks in that brain-tank of yours, Hartley," admitted Curtis. "What you say goes. The Cherub now knows enough of the game to look out for himself for the rest of the day. Run away, baby boy, and sort of mix

in with the populace. When you hear a bell, and see a crowd streaking over yonder"—pointing toward Weymouth Hall—"follow the trail and watch out for me. I'll try to fix it so that we sit next to each other in the grub-wagon."

The Cherub obeyed and striding down the campus, in a few moments had a small crowd about him, above which his form towered like a tall pine among birch trees.

And then the quartet wandered about the campus. The joyous tingle of the frosty air brought the glow to their cheeks and laughter to their lips; while they took part in the fun, and helped out the songs, and met old schoolmates newly returned and enjoyed themselves in general until it was time for them to prepare for dinner.

On entering the hall Archie saw to his great satisfaction that the Ridgeleys were again in their accustomed seats and the smiles of welcome that Mildred gave him made him feel that he'd sooner be at school than at home. And when he came to think this over, he fell to wondering why it could be so, and felt a trifle ashamed of himself in consequence.

Now whether it was the presence of the little maiden or the inspirations of his surroundings and his schoolmates, or just sheer boyish spirits

that brought it about, cannot be said, but the fact remains that Archie enjoyed that meal as he never had enjoyed a meal before—not the dishes exactly, but the chat, movement, the lights, the noble proportions of the hall, the feeling that he was among congenial companions. And in a dim, boyish fashion, he promised himself that he would never be unworthy of his associates, or the traditions of Donchester. The school that makes boys think such thoughts as these breeds a goodly and useful type of scholars.

"Don't you want to hang around the faculty lawn?" asked Mackay mischievously at the end of the meal.

"No, and I don't want any stupid talk, either," replied Archie loftily, "and you'd better get that resignation of yours ready, Mac," he added, "for see whom Stanley is talking to."

Sure enough, the football captain and Travers were holding earnest conversation with Chipp who was walking between them. It was easy to see by the gestures of the trainer and the captain that they were questioning the Cherub in regard to his knowledge of the game.

Mackay groaned in affected consternation. "Fancy tackling that young sky-scraper. Why if he fell on you and the ball, you'd have to get

a derrick to get at the remains of yourself and the pigskin," he wailed.

"If you were the remains, I don't see how you could get the derrick to remove yourself," said Archie reprovingly. "But I just want to say this, Mac, if you ever again go clinking and cackling about me and—the Ridgeleys, I'll tell the fellows that you told the others and myself that you were going to quit football because you were scared green by the Cherub. Honest I will." And here Archie roared with laughter at the expression on the face of his chum that his threat had brought into being.

Mac shook his head sorrowfully. "How sharper than a serpent's tooth to have a thankless minny," he quoted.

"Not thankless, only wise. Anyhow, it goes. You open your mouth and I'll open mine wider.

> "Blood is red and sky is blue,
> Water's white, and I'll speak true!"

chanted Archie.

"I'm mum, but under stress and duress, as the lawyers say, meaning that you've got the strangle-hold on my chin-wag," acknowledged Mackay.

"I wish you'd put the strangle-hold on some of that slang of yours, Mac. You're getting

so that you put the speaks on the Fritz every time you gurgle."

"Who-e-e-e," yelled Mackay, "and now who's the slangy party? You're a nice chap to call me down for using talks that the dictionaries are shy on."

"I just wanted you to hear how it sounds —this murdering the language in the way that you do. A bit of slang is all right, but it's all wrong when you use it right along. And say, Mac," added Archie as an afterthought, "I'm getting to be a beastly young prig, I think, everlastingly lecturing you and the other fellows about what you should and shouldn't do."

Mackay put his arm affectionately round the speaker's neck. "Not a bit of it, young 'un," he said; "what you say is solid stuff. A prig is a chap who's stuck on himself because he fancies that he's better than other people, and talks about his goodness most of the time and the badness of others the rest of the time. That isn't you, Arch, not by a long shot. You're all to the good, Kiddo, and I'm a-talking, I am."

Just then somebody slapped them on the shoulders in a friendly fashion, and turning they saw that it was Harper. After he had given and received greetings, and had made in-

quiries about their holidays he turned the conversation on athletic affairs.

"I suppose when the time comes, you'll feel fit for the indoor meet, Hartley?" he said laughingly.

"I think so, sir."

"Glad to hear that. You'll have to start training right away so as to get the Christmas goodies out of you. The meet's only three weeks away, you know. By the way, who's that big boy I saw you with just now?"

"His name is Chipp, sir," answered Archie, "and he plays football. Mackay's hoping that Captain Stanley will take him up."

Mackay looked daggers at the speaker, opened his mouth to contradict, thought better of it, and remained silent.

"Is that so? Well, I'll speak to Stanley about Chipp and perhaps he'll do as Mackay wishes. Good night, boys."

"You little fiend," cried Mackay, shaking his fist at the giggling Archie. "You double-dyed traitor, trying to have your chum made over into squash pie."

"No fear of your being squashed, Mac," was the reply, "you're too tough for that. Besides, you ought to be much obliged to me. If you live through a season's practice with Chipp on

the other side, you'll be fit to buck a varsity line-up."

"But shall I live?" moaned the other in mock anguish.

"That depends on the Cherub. My advice is that you keep on his right side and keep away from his underside—in a scrimmage."

"Archie," said Mackay impressively, "do you know that you're getting to be horribly funny?"

"No. There'll be more horror than fun in it for you if ever Chipp low-tackles you though," replied the other cheerfully. "What a stunning item it would make for the *Donchester Herald.* There hasn't been a fatal football accident here for years, so I'm told. What a credit it would be to you—or the Cherub—if one or the other of you broke that which Parrot would call 'the siege of peace.'"

"Oh, go bite your tongue off, you croaker!" growled Mackay.

As our hero turned into bed that night, he felt that he had in a measure, repaid Mac's clinking about Mildred.

CHAPTER V

It was lunch hour on the day following and the hungry youngsters in obedience to the clamor of the preparatory bell, had formed long cues outside the "feed-box," as they irreverently termed Weymouth Hall in which they took their meals. Darcy, the monitor of the day, hove in sight, trotting beside whom was a small boy who looked anxiously but curiously at the lines of Donchesterians. He was a nice-appearing little chap, freckled healthily, having sparkling deep blue eyes, a cute, snubby nose, and a mouth that seemed to be breaking into a smile all the time.

Darcy walked straight up to Mackay. "Here's a youngster who has just arrived, Mac," said he; "his name is Emmet Murphy. He's only been in this country a week. I want you to take him under your wing and put him through. He'll tell you all about himself when he makes friends with you. I'm going to fix it so that he'll sit next to you, Mac. Emmet, this is Mackay." And off he went.

Mackay eyed his new charge for a moment

and held out his hand; Emmet took it, scrutinizing the other's face meantime, so closely that the latter laughed again.

"Well, Em, am I all right; shall we get on together?" he asked.

"Oi think so. But you mustn't call me Em. That's a girl's name, you know," the newcomer answered with just a touch of the brogue.

Mackay and his chums smiled approvingly.

"Faith, he's no gurrl but a bit uv a broth uv a bhoy," remarked Parrot with a good-natured snicker.

Emmet turned on him like a flash, his eyes darkening so that they looked black instead of blue. "If ye're tryin' to poke fun at me, ye long, lean thing, I'll lick ye, so I will," he said, as he took a step toward the offender.

Parrot shook his head gravely. "Far be it from me disrespectfully to treat a person who bears a name that is compounded of that of a patriot and a tuber; the one historically brilliant, the other dietetically desirable, both equally famous—"

"Oh! shut off your face-faucet!" cried Mackay. "Stop buzzing the kid." He turned to Emmet. "He wants to say that he didn't mean to—to offend you. And you mustn't be so free with your fists here, youngster. If you do, you'll get disliked and much licked, neither of

which is pleasant to a minny—a newcomer, you know."

"Who'll tread on th' tail uv me owld green coat!
Who'll say Oi'm no man to me face.
Oi'll sphlit his mane head; Oi'll choke his mane t'roat!
For Oi come av th' Fighting Race!"

chanted Parrot. Mackay was in the act of opening his mouth to make a further remonstrance, when the second bell rang; the great doors swung open and the boys, forgetting all but the lunch that was awaiting them, began to move forward.

The little Irish lad was placed by the side of Mackay, as Darcy had promised. As soon as the sharp edge was taken off his appetite and that of his protector, the two began to talk, Archie and the others listening. Our hero, by the way, had already taken a great fancy to the new boy.

Emmet was an orphan, his father having died some months before, and his mother while he was a baby. He had lived all his life in Belfast, Ireland, where he had attended a private school as a day boarder. On the death of his father, his uncle, after whom he was named, and who was a well-to-do contractor of New York, came to Ireland, and made arrangements with the boarding-school people to keep his

nephew until the end of the year, he himself having business in Europe that kept him busy there for many months. Then he returned to Ireland, brought Emmet out to the United States and sent him to Donchester. All of which the minny told in reply to the tactful questions put to him by Mackay. You see, a small boy who spoke with a genuine Irish accent and was a stranger to the country, was a novelty at the school, which fact in a way, excused the curiosity that he aroused among the lads into whose society he had been cast.

"Do you run or jump or do anything?" asked Archie when Mackay had gotten through with his questioning.

"Sure Oi have legs, haven't Oi?" replied Murphy simply.

"I guess so," admitted Archie when the laughter that the minny's reply had excited had subsided, "and if they're half as good as your tongue is sharp, you'll do yourself proud on the track."

"The Spud, gentlemen—and I presume that he will be known hereafter by that title, Murphy being pure Gaelic for potato, and Spud, as we are aware, being the court or diplomatic term for that useful vegetable, also—the Spud I say, possesses that finest form of wit, the spontaneously unconscious—"

"In which respect he differs from you, Parrot," broke in Curtis. "You haul your jokes out of your system with the easy grace of an ornery mule breaking frozen prairie with a blunt plough."

"What may it be that they're talking about?" whispered Emmet to Mackay.

"None of them quite know," replied Mackay maliciously in a stage whisper, which means a whisper that is audible to everybody.

"They're not making fun of me, are they?" pursued the youngster, his cheek flushing and his fists clenching.

"No, you little spitfire, no," laughed his mentor. "And you really—but I'll talk to you later."

The clatter of knives and forks gradually came to an end, but the talk continued. There came from the table at which sat Dr. Pardee, the principal, the stroke of a hand-bell, and silence fell on the boys as they with the doctor, arose, bent their heads and gave thanks to the Giver of all meals.

Soon the meal was over and all came trooping out, the patter of their footsteps being punctuated by bursts of laughter and chatter. Emmet, wide-eyed and wondering, was in the act of asking Mackay a question about Parrot, when Darcy came up.

"Come with me, Murphy," said he, "I'll make you known to the tutors of the first." And away trotted the minny by the side of the lanky monitor.

Mackay laughed as he watched the pair. "Queer little duck, that," said he, "but he's got pluck anyhow. What's attractive about the pattern of his pants, Archie?" Our hero was eyeing the minny's legs with thoughtful attention and hence, the other's query.

Archie came out of his reverie. "Oh, nothing. Only I was thinking that that kid walked as if he could run."

"Ah, ha!" chimed in Parrot, "professional jealousy, eh? Afraid that he's going to run away--get on to that joke—run away with your laurels. Hamstring him; cut the tendons of his heel, Archie."

"And while you're about it, do likewise with Parrot's tongue-strings." It was Curtis that spoke.

"My young friend from Kansas you have a wit that is as nimble as your native jack-rabbit and as dry as your native alkali lands," retorted the Parrot in a tone of burlesque seriousness; "twice within the hour have you made me the butt of your jests. Beware of the third attempt lest—"

"Lest what?" demanded Curtis.

"Lest I should surprise you by laughing at your attempts to be funny!"

"Stung!" cried Curtis, joining in the mirth that followed.

CHAPTER VI

In the mail of the day following was a letter for Archie from his father. After telling the news about the mother and relatives and neighbors and pets and himself, the writer went on:

"There is a matter about which I was going to talk to you when you were home, Archie, but on second thoughts, I concluded to write to you in regard to it instead. You were so busy having a good time when you were with us—and I'm *so* glad that you had such a time—that the subject would probably have been forgotten by you when you returned to school, which would have been a pity as I want you to remember it. It's this; you know, Sonnie, that I am more than glad that you made out as well as you did at the sprints. This, not only for your own sake, but for the sake of the old school as well. And it is my belief that you will do even better still; that when the Interscholastic Meet takes place, you will help to put the Donchester flag on the top of the staff of the campus. It may even be,

Archie, that if you keep your health and strength, you may become a member of the athletic committee and—who knows—even the track captain. I wouldn't talk in this way to you, if I didn't feel that there is little danger of your having an attack of 'hydro.'

"But I want you to remember, my boy, that athletics are only a means to an end. They are really a part of your education, giving you that health of body that insures health or activity of mind. Unless you have this activity, you cannot become the good and clever man that I hope that you will be. You see I have said 'good and clever,' because after all, *goodness* by which I mean, manliness; the desire to help another fellow who's got into trouble; the willingness to lick other fellows who are mean to the helpless; the ability to say 'No' to the wrong that tempts us; such goodness, I say, goes hand in hand with true cleverness. Cleverness, for the most part, consists of looking ahead and steering our course by what we see there. Now, if you do your duty to yourself and others, by being good in the way that I have described, you are clever, because you are avoiding the rocks and shoals that strew the channel of sin and selfishness. A man who is bad in any way, is selfish in the first place and stupid in the second. For he doesn't look

ahead, and is content to swap present so-called pleasure for future and certain disaster.

"But I've got away from what I set out to say, and I hope, Archie, that you don't think that I am writing a sermon to you. It isn't intended to be such, but just a talk of 'man to man,' the one who is doing the talking being the older and therefore, the more experienced of the two. To come back to athletics then. I want you to go on as you are going in an athletic sense; getting all the fun and glory out of them that you legitimately can. But I want you to always bear this in mind;—that athletics are your servants, perhaps I had better say, helpers, and not your *masters*. Master them and you do well; let them master you, and you do ill. Do not let them take precedence of all else in your young life. There are a whole lot of things in existence besides an ability to go one hundred yards in ten seconds or to capture the schoolboy records for a high-jump or a distance run. These latter, desirable as they are, are not in it with what I may call the educational essentials of life, by which I mean, among other things, the ability to write a clear, flowing hand; the use of good grammatical language; all-round historical knowledge, a general acquaintance with great authors, and so forth. Yet I've known schoolboys,

yes and college 'men' also, who couldn't spell; had hazy notions about the Constitution of the United States, didn't know whether Malacca was in Europe, Asia, or Africa, but could talk football or baseball or running without end. Their brains were bounded by the fence of the athletic field, you know. They were examples of athletic-ridden folk who had gotten all the harm and none of the good out of the sport.

"The most useful citizen—and the happiest—Archie, is he who is well-balanced; whose brain and body are equally well developed. Such a man must have been both athlete and student, enjoying the track while appreciating the recitation hall. I hope that you will be one of that brand, Sonnie. I have seen nothing in your actions, and I have received no school reports that would lead me to believe otherwise. All the same, I have thought it well to point out to you the danger that awaits a youngster who, like yourself, gives great athletic promise. Go in for athletics as much as you like; but go in for study also. Make up your mind that you will neglect neither one nor the other, and you'll come out with credit to both yourself and your school."

Archie read the letter more than once, and then folding it up, put it carefully away in his

trunk. Also, he made up his mind to follow the advice that it contained, although that advice was already in line with his inclinations. For he was lucky enough to have the "balance" of which his father had spoken, enjoying books and athletics with almost equal relish. And then, too, Archie and his father were "chums" the latter having taken pains to cultivate a sort of confidential friendship with his son that led the lad to rely on all that his father said and did. The youngster who has a father of this kind is fortunate indeed.

"When you get through with your thoughts, young man," said Mackay, as he fixed his four-in-hand in front of the mirror, "I'd like to powwow with you about a raft of things."

Archie, who had dressed before he began reading his letter, was looking out of the window, whistling softly to himself, as was his way when meditating. He turned quickly.

"Go on, Mac," he answered, "I'm listening."

"Know then, that Evans gave me a tip that Snaggy and his crowd propose to rag that minny of mine—the Spud—this afternoon and that they intend to get all the fun out of him that they can. Decent of Evans to put me on."

Archie's eyes twinkled. "That means that the Viligance Committee will have to get busy, I suppose?"

"Pree-cise-ly, my youthful Sherlock Holmes. But in view of the tabasco in the kid's temper, I rather fancy that the Vigilantes will have to protect the raggers from the Spud instead of the Spud from the raggers."

Our hero joined in the peal of laughter that the possibilities of the situation caused Mackay to emit.

"All the same, Mac," ventured Archie after a pause, "the Spud must be taught that he can't be allowed to use his bunch-of-fives every time that somebody says or does something that he doesn't like. If he doesn't learn this through you, he will through somebody else, in which case he's likely to get more kicks than nickels."

"Archie, at times you really show human intelligence," declared Mackay solemnly. "Du bist sprechen much wisdom. Tell you what we'll do with this small bunch of gunpowder; I'll discourse to him like a papa on what a minny has to expect from the raggers and how said minny is to behave during the ordeal. Then let him look out for himself, the Vigs. standing by to see that Snags and his following don't go too far. For his own sake, he's got to be tamed a bit, as you very properly suggest. Now for something else. Stanley gave me a hint last night that the selections for the indoor meet and the beginning of the training

for the same would take place this week and that—"

"Hooray!" interrupted Archie. "Bully! Hooray!"

Mackay frowned in burlesque disapproval. "It's very rude of little boys to interrupt their elders when the latter are speaking," he said severely, "but I'll excuse you this time, because you're excited. And I think that I am to be an entry for the three-mile run—at least Stanley hinted as much."

"That is, if you survive Chipp before the meet takes place."

"Silence, croaker. If it's true—this about the distance run—I guess that I'll have to shake football for the rest of the month and put in my time in getting in fettle for the event."

"Clever plan of getting out of Chipp's way, that," mused Archie; "I'll have to put the crowd on to it. Mac, don't try to excuse yourself and—there goes the breakfast bell."

Mackay hesitated, the desire to get even with Archie for teasing him, struggling with the summons of the bell. Finally, appetite gained the victory and with a look that was half a threat, and half a plea, Mac contented himself with, "No, you won't peach, old chap," and with that the pair departed for the "feed-box."

CHAPTER VII

The afternoon recitations were ended and the campus was in consequence sprinkled with groups of youngsters, each one of whom was behaving exactly as his spirits or his inclination prompted him. As a result, there was singing and whistling; running, jumping, and skylarking in general; much movement and more hullabaloo. The lads who walked or bore themselves sedately, were few and far between, but among them—for a wonder—was Mackay, who was busily pouring words of wisdom and warning into the ears of the Spud.

"So you see, Kiddie," said Mackay at the end of his exhortation, "you mustn't lose your temper when the boys jolly you—we call it clinking here—but just laugh at them and jolly back if you can. If you can't, laugh anyhow and keep your fists in your pocket. If they think that they can get your Irish up—"

"You'll have to stop talking about the Oirish," snapped the minny; "if ye don't, Oi'll—"

"There you go again, Spud," broke in Mackay with smiling patience. "That's the kind

of thing that's going to make trouble for you right along. If they find out that they can make you mad whenever they want to by—by saying something about—well, about the country in which you were born—they'll tease you all the time and you won't be a bit happy here but very miserable."

"He's right, Emmet," declared Archie who had joined the pair unperceived; "you simply have to keep your Paddy down or—"

The Spud whirled fiercely; clenched his fists, opened his mouth to speak, checked himself with an effort and forcing a smile, nodded to our hero.

The latter, watching the hot-headed youngster, smiled back approvingly. "That's the style, Spud-o!" he cried. "Keep it up! And excuse me for saying what I did. I didn't mean to rile you."

The Spud muttered something to the effect that it was all right, hesitated a moment and then diving down into his inside pocket pulled out a small tin box which he opened, thereby exhibiting things that looked like big black marbles having a white spot on their uppermost ends.

Archie shook his head good-naturedly when the Spud extended the box to him, evidently intending it as a token of peace.

"No, thank you. You keep 'em. We don't start marbles here until the end of April," explained Archie.

"And you'll need all you have, for we've a crowd of cracks," added Mackay.

For an instant the Irish boy looked puzzled and angry. Then his face cleared as the facts of the situation came to him and he began to laugh as only a happy lad can.

"The joke must be on us, Arch," volunteered Mackay, as he eyed the mirthful Spud. "When he has emptied his system of giggles, perhaps he'll tell us why we seem so horribly funny to him."

"Those are not marbles, they are Connemara coweyes, so they are," sputtered Spud between hilarious spasms. And he popped one in his mouth and again held out the box to the others.

Mackay gravely took one of the coweyes and Archie did likewise. Both sniffed, then tasted, then began to chew with much relish, Mackay especially.

"Spud," said the latter, as he swallowed the last morsel of the coweye, "you're my friend for life. You've put over a new one on me. Where can you beg, borrow, or buy 'em?"

"You can borrow some more of me—you, too," replied Spud, turning his blue-black eyes

on Archie. "I've a big box of them packed in with me clothes. But you can't buy them over here, Uncle Pat says. 'Tis only in Oireland that the shops sell them. But Aunt Kathleen knows the way to make them, and she made these for me. Both of you are welcome to them, you know."

Mackay extended his hand. "Muchee thanks, generous kid," said he, "but we won't play piggy with you. But oh, my gastric juices, aren't they good, grand, galupshus; gorgeous, gemniferous—"

"Oh, stow it Mac!" broke in Archie. "Spud will think you're nutty. Tell you what, though. We'll get Spud to write to his aunt for the recipe which we'll turn over to Aunt Sally and she'll make coweyes—"

"Till the cows come home," interrupted Mackay. Aunt Sally was a big cheery, colored woman from the South, who, with her two daughters, ran a goody shop and small restaurant near the school. There it was that the Donchesterians were accustomed to regale themselves on a whole lot of toothsome dainties and dishes prepared after southern recipes. "But here comes the rest of our crowd. Let's give them the glad tidings that the coweye has arrived at Donchester."

So Curtis, Parrot, Chipp, and Evans, who

was still a trifle hesitant in his manner, were made acquainted with the candy, Spud generously sharing the remaining contents of his box with the newcomers. Also was the Aunt Sally proposition voted to be a splendid stroke of genius on the part of Archie.

"Here comes Snaggy and his tribe," said the latter suddenly. "Now, Spud, you're going to be ragged and don't forget what we have told you. Hand out a smile and keep your fists in your trousers."

"Before we part company with our esteemed young friend," began Parrot in the pompous tone that he usually used when getting off a joke, "I'd like to quote the late Lord Byron thus:

> "I never knew a Spuddy dear
> To cheer me with his sweet coweyes
> But when I learned to love 'em well
> He'd nary left to glad my eyes,

"Also my mouth, my hearers."

"There has been many a party rolled in a cacti patch for less than that," declared Curtis, sternly. "The allusion being unto this same poetry of yours."

"Please snow again—I don't get the drift of your remark," said Parrot politely. "The Kansas language is so different from English."

"Shall I stop behind and see fair play?" asked Evans before Curtis could get back at Parrot.

"Good idea," said Archie, looking at the other inquiringly.

"And I'd like to stay with Evans." It was Chipp's falsetto that was heard.

"By all means, stay, Cherub," said Parrot, and then he spouted:

"Like some tall cliff that lifts its mighty form,
To shield the Spud when breaks on him the storm
Of raggers fierce-eyed, deadly, lo! he stays,
Does Chipp, gigantic—"

The empty coweye box, deftly thrown by Mackay, here landed on Parrot's countenance, stopping his flow of rhyme. Whereupon he remarked that English literature didn't seem to be popular at Donchester and that he would cease from casting rhetorical pearls before swine.

Curtis took a rapid glance to the rear. "Evans, you take the Spud and walk away from us," he said. "Cherub, you sail away by yourself and only join the Snaggy crowd when the ragging has begun. The rest of us will stroll slowly along but will be in reach in case we are needed."

"Don't forget, Spud," whispered Archie in

a kindly tone as the lad and his companion were moving off.

"Sure and Oi'll try not to," replied Emmet. There was a look in his eyes that told that his warm little Irish heart was responsive to the thoughtfulness of our hero.

CHAPTER VIII

The Snaggyites paused for a moment as they saw Evans and the Spud making for the north side of the campus and the Cherub going in the other direction. According to school traditions, a minny couldn't be ragged except on the day of his arrival. Afterwards, he was left at peace. But Snaggy hadn't by any means forgotten the humiliation that he had suffered at the hands, or rather at the body of the Cherub, and he was burning for a chance to get back at the latter. In order to do so he was quite prepared to violate the tradition in question in some way or other. At the same time, he and his following wanted to rag Spud in the worst way; having gotten a line on his belligerent nature and his sensitiveness to any slur on the land of his birth. So now you have the reason why the crowd hesitated when its members saw the Spud going one way and the Cherub the other.

"All right, fellows," said Snaggy after a few moments' reflection, "he'll keep." He jerked his thumb in the direction of the big boy.

"We'll go for young Shamrock first and when we're through with him, we'll get busy with that big stiff." Snaggy's face wasn't good to look on as he spoke, for he hated the Cherub with an intensity that was only a little less than that which he harbored for Archie.

I just want to say right here, boys, that unreasoning hate is one of the most evil of emotions. By "unreasoning hate" I mean a hate that is out of all proportion to the thing that has excited it. It is a good thing heartily to despise, even hate, some things, especially those vices that are as bad for your body as they are for your soul. But when you allow yourself to become possessed of a hate that is far bigger than the matter that gave birth to it, there is something radically wrong with you. It was so with Snaggy. He had been punched and outrun by Archie, and that was all that there was to it. A good-natured lad, like yourself, might have felt sore for a day or so, but in the long run would have made up, would *not* have repeated the offense that caused the blow, and would have tried to get the better of Archie on the track, in a sportsmanlike manner. But Snaggy did none of these things. Forbidden the track by his actions, as we have seen in the first book of this series, he blamed that as well as more of his misfortunes on Archie, whereas

they were due to his own perverseness. His hate of Archie, rooted as it was in his unhappy nature, grew thicker and stronger until it possessed him, so to speak. Something of the same kind also happened when the Cherub turned the tables on him during the ragging of the former. And Snaggy's hate of the big minny was none the less by reason of the fact that the humiliation brought on him by the Cherub was witnessed by Archie. It was a black, lasting, vindictive hate that Snaggy cherished for the pair, very different from the temporary healthy grudge that you may have against the chap who turned the laugh on you when you were trying to get one on him, or the fellow on the other side who, purposely, as you believe, roughed you during the scrimmage in the last half of the game. If ever you're tempted to coddle and nurse a grudge, don't do it. Such a grudge will soon cease to be a baby and will grow into a giant that is apt to become your master.

So, under the leadership of Snaggy, the group followed Evans and his charge until the latter were on the further side of the campus. The raggers preferred that they should be as far distant from Archie and his friends as possible on this occasion.

"Hi, Evans!" called out Blobs as the two

groups got within earshot. "Where did you steal the Paddy baby from?"

"Master Evans is promoted to the post of a nursemaid," added Skiddy. "Spin the Kid round, Nursey, so that we can see if he's got a green face."

Evans caught the Spud by the arm as the latter was in the act of turning on the tormentors. The action seemed to recall to Spud his promise as given to Archie, and by a mighty effort, he walked on, his cheeks crimson, his eyes wet with indignant tears and a burning desire in his heart to "go" for the raggers, tooth and nail.

Snaggy, showing his stumps by a malicious grin, overtook the pair. "What's your hurry, Evans?" he said. "Take it easy. I want to chew the rag with you and this Mick."

"Ye can chew nothing with those teeth of yours," flashed the Spud. "'Tis meself that 'ud cut up me face for cat's meat if it looked like the one that you're wearing."

Evans howled with laughter even as he tried to repress the youngster, and Snaggy's followers did likewise. A minny with a sharp tongue and the courage to use it was somewhat a rarity at Donchester. Besides that, Snaggy wasn't popular even with his intimates. Few fellows of his type make real friends. So that the

others rather enjoyed seeing him being "notched off" in an unexpected fashion.

Snaggy's right hand shot out and caught the Spud's wrist, while his left hand passed between the boy's body and his captured arm. Then Snaggy gave that same arm a sort of twisting pull backwards, with the result that the Spud felt as if the limb was being broken in two on Snaggy's left forearm.

Repressing the impulse to scream with pain, the Spud kicked out sideways with all his force, his heel landing on the shin of his persecutor. At the same instant, Evans sprang forward.

"Here, Snags, you stop that!" he shouted. "You know that that kind of thing isn't allowed in ragging. Stop it, I say!"

"You chaps hold him back while I teach this Mick-minny his lesson," yelled Snaggy, rubbing his sore shin with his foot and giving an extra twist to the Spud's arm. "Hold him, I tell you!"

Three or four of the others grabbed Evans just in time to prevent him from getting his hands on Snaggy. He did his best to get free but failed and thereupon shouted at the top of his voice to the Vigilantes. Snaggy scowled at him viciously.

"Calling to your new gang, are you?" he snarled. "Well, they won't get here until I'm

through with this peeling of a rotten potato." And with this he gave the Spud's arm another cruel twist.

"Ye dirty coward. Ye daren't let go of me lest I bate the hide off of ye!" gasped the Spud between twists, his brogue becoming more in evidence as his anger increased. "Oh, ye black baste!"

"Let go of the lad!" shrilled a sudden voice in Snaggy's ears and above him towered the bulk and face of the Cherub, the latter looking like a small thundercloud.

Snaggy hesitated. Whereupon the Cherub gripped his body with a pair of mighty hands, back-heeled, and as the bully wavered, repeated the performance of the day before and fell on him. At that moment the Vigilantes arrived.

CHAPTER IX

"WHAT's all this about?" cried Archie as he and the others eyed the struggling pair on the ground and the group gathered about Evans. These last had released their prisoner, by the way, when they saw the reinforcements approaching.

"I don't think you need ask. Snaggy's been up to his usual tricks, I'll bet," ventured Curtis. "If he has, and seeing Cherub is my minny, he's got to account to me for any damage done to the person or feelings of that tender little darling. Cherub, will you please stop reclining on his Snaglets and tell us what has happened?"

"Let the Spud do the telling," broke in Evans. "He ought to be the orator of the occasion."

The Cherub slowly rose, and Snaggy, glaring at the circle of jeering faces, did likewise.

"Speak up, Spud," said Archie encouragingly, as the other hesitated. "We're listening."

" 'Twas loike this, thin," began the minny

using "th' laste taste uv th' brogue" as he did so, "he," pointing to Snaggy, "twisted me a-r-rm and gave me no chance to use me fists. They got a-holt of him"—indicating Evans—"whin he sees that this ommadauhn who hasn't all his teeth is hurting me, and tries to stop him from so doing. Then I lashes out with me brogan and he hurts me all the worse. Then the big boy comes running up and tells him to stop. But he won't and the big boy throws him down and sits on him. That's all except that my arm is sore and I'd like to lick that Snaggy if you'll please let me."

"Unvarnished, convincing eloquence," declared Parrot. "Homeric in its direct simplicity—"

"The Spud has told the truth," interjected Evans, "but he has forgotten to say that Snags did what he could to hurt his feelings by reflecting on his nationality. That isn't fair ragging, is it?"

"Of course it isn't, and nobody knows it better than Snaggy," asserted Curtis, "but you can't expect that he has anything to do with fairness, you know."

"Oh, shut your mouth," growled the bully. "Run back to Kansas and eat sunflowers."

The boy from the West turned white under his

tan, paused a moment to get control of his voice, and then said steadily:

"Look here, Pierce. I have had it in for you for a number of things for a long time and I think that this cowardly business of yours this afternoon, has about brought matters to a head. The mouth-shutting will be done by you and not by me, for I propose to put that ugly gap of yours out of business for some time. I'm going to lick you and lick you good. You can take your tuggle now, or you can put it off until to-morrow, whichever you like. When we get through, I may be able to eat sunflowers, but you'll be glad of spoon-meat for a week or so."

"That's the longest speech in the *Histoire de Curtis* as far as my experience goes," began Parrot. "And what reply doth my Lord Snaggy make to the brave challenge of the Seigneur de Kansas?"

"I want to cut in here," spoke up Mackay. "Seems to me that I've got first call for a tuggle with the Snaggy party. You remember yesterday, Archie?"

Our hero nodded, but said nothing. Much as Snaggy deserved a thrashing he, Archie, would have been glad if there had been any way of squaring up affairs without resorting to what Parrot called the "arbitrament of fists." Not

that Archie wasn't quite ready to scrap when necessary, but like all really plucky boys, he didn't love fighting for fighting's sake, but only as a means of resenting an insult or preserving his rights.

"We'll leave it to—to the coyote party himself then," said Curtis after a pause during which the crowd waited for Snaggy to speak. "He shall give tongue as to whether he wants to fight Mackay or myself first—"

"Oi have to have a whack at him as well," piped up the Spud. "Me a-r-rm tingles yet with the handling that he gave it, the brute." And the youngster's eyes gleamed with the light of battle.

"Do you prefer that your remains shall be interred or cremated?" asked Parrot anxiously as he turned to Snaggy. "You'd better tell me, you know—really you had."

Snaggy looked out of the corners of his eyes at the others, finished beating the dust off the knees of his trousers and raised his head with a half defiant, half cynical smile:

"When a fellow says he's sorry for having done a thing, that settles it, I s'pose," he said in his creaky voice. "Well, I'll say I'm sorry for what I said to Mackay yesterday and said to Curtis to-day and for what I did to that sprig of shamrock—" The Spud tried to jump

at him but Archie held him back. "And that's about all."

"In other words, Lord Snaggy declines to pick up the gauntlet and essay the combat," droned Parrot with a grin that nearly made the tip of his hooked nose touch his chin.

"Then you won't fight either me or Mackay?" queried Curtis, as if he couldn't believe his ears.

"Nor even Spud?" added Mackay.

Snaggy scowled angrily. "I've apologized, haven't I?" he snapped. "Do you want me to apologize and tuggle as well? You chaps seem mighty hard to please."

"He's right," interposed Archie. "He says he's sorry. I for one don't believe that he is, but you've got to take his word for it. Come along." He linked his arms in those of Mackay and the Spud and tried to draw them along.

"As Arch says, we've got to swallow this party's apology although we don't like the taste of it," announced Curtis, "but I sure wants to serve notice on him that he can't repeat his crawl. If he acts similar, I acts otherwise. Apology or no apology, he takes a licking. Come on, fellows."

"Thank goodness that I'm not mixed up with that collection any more," said Evans to Archie, as the gathering broke up. "What a

double-dyed idiot I was to allow myself to—to —oh, well, you know what I mean."

"That's all right, Evans," replied Archie in a tone that showed that he quite understood the other's meaning, "don't let's chin about it." And he tactfully turned the talk on the forthcoming indoor athletic meeting of the school.

"Hartley, you're a brick," muttered Evans before he joined in the discussion of the meet that followed. "After the way that I behaved to you—"

"Will you coil up!" cried our hero, "and has Harper said anything to you about your being entered in the short sprints? I expect that he will, if he hasn't."

Evans's penitential remarks had to do with his attempts to beat Archie during the fall athletic try-outs, by unfair and unsportsmanlike means that had been suggested to him by Snaggy, under whose influence he was at the time. How he failed in defeating our hero, and how he woke up to the harm that he was doing himself by allowing Snaggy to dominate him, is told at length in the first volume of Archie's adventures.

Snaggy's retreat from the campus was accompanied by looks of amused contempt on the part of the spectators for many more had witnessed the incident than those mentioned in

this story. But the Donchester lads behaved like gentlemen even when they had to do with cads you know. And so they neither yelled at nor rough-housed Snaggy and his pals as these latter moved off, but as has been said, let their eyes instead of their mouths and hands, express the feelings in regard to the conduct of the bully.

The incidents of this afternoon have been told at some length because they led to grave consequences for some of the boys that figured in them. What these consequences were will be related later in this story.

CHAPTER X

Those who read the first and preceding book of the doings of Archie and his chums, will remember that in its pages, stress is laid on the athletic spirit that prevailed at Donchester. The field and the track were rightfully regarded by the faculty as forming an important part of the educational course of the school. This for the reason that not only do athletics, properly understood and used, furnish one with that present health and lasting endurance that are the underpinning of a successful life, but in addition, they teach many things that text-books cannot. Command of temper; knack of taking hard knocks with a smile, and defeat with a determination to try again, the instinct of fair play, and the ability to "play team" when necessary, which means the playing for others instead of for one's self, are a few of the manly virtues that are brought into being by the cinder path, the field or the gymnasium. And then, too, the athletic boy is pretty sure to be a clean boy—clean in person, in mouth, and in mind. The bath is an important part of athletics, you

know. Also the lad who thinks enough of his body to train it athletically will take care that he does not harm it by indulging in evil habits or destructive vices. Therefore, he doesn't use the language or think the thoughts that arise from these vices.

At Donchester, only those who stood well in their studies were allowed to take an active part in athletics. Of course, no boy was barred from the gym or the field, but if he was persistently careless or slovenly at recitations, he wasn't allowed to become a member of a team or compete in the inter-class or inter-school events that took place several times during the year and were alike looked on as highly important occasions by the Donchesterians. To the credit of the school be it said, the boys who were unavailable in an athletic sense under the rule in question, were very few indeed. And at the end of the term, their parents were notified that their room was preferred to their company, or words to that effect. Naturally, there were some youngsters who were physically unfitted to take an active part in the strenuous joys of the life athletic, but the rule named didn't apply to these. It was also characteristic of the Donchester spirit that these weaklings were not only honorary members of the various athletic teams, but in ad-

dition, were given the best seats and looked after in general by their more vigorous companions, when practice or a meet was in progress.

You will now understand why the indoor inter-class meet that was now drawing near, was regarded as being of much importance from the viewpoint of the youngsters. Then, too, it was through the medium of the meet that entries were selected for *the* athletic event of the year, which was no less than the Annual Indoor Invitation Games of the Boston Athletic Association. This meeting was held in the huge Mechanics Hall at Boston and the competitors were exclusively schoolboys; the educational establishments from all over New England sending representatives to uphold their athletic reputations. When I tell you that as many as sixty high and preparatory schools have before now sent their crack athletes to the games, you will realize that the latter were something out of the ordinary in an athletic sense.

The inter-class meeting at Donchester was always set for the last week in January. There were two classes of events, viz., those for the seniors and those for the juniors. As far as the latter were concerned, the competitors were selected from among the boys who had made good at the try-outs of the preceding fall. It will be

remembered that Archie had exhibited wonderful sprinting ability for his age at the last tryout as was told in detail in the first book dealing with his school-days. Then it was that he defeated Evans and all the other crack contestants in the 100-yards dash. Travers, the old trainer of the school; Harper, the track captain and the athletic committee in general, believed that Archie was the owner of phenomenal sprinting powers and that time and careful training would so develop them that he would cover himself and Donchester with athletic glory. They also looked to him to bring Donchester up from the second place that she now occupied in the Interscholastic Games to the first place. This latter had been held by Ameswood Preparatory School for two years in succession, in spite of tremendous efforts on the part of Donchester to oust her rival from the coveted niche in the temple of New England athletic fame. At the last series of the games, Ameswood had defeated Donchester by a narrow margin only. So that the athletic committee of the latter felt that it was now justified in believing that *if* nothing happened to Archie in the interval, and *if* their entries were up to their average quality and *if* Ameswood didn't spring an athletic surprise, the chances were that the games would end with Donchester colors being carried

round the arena of Mechanics Hall, as was the way by which the winning school was honored. So that you see that Archie was quite a personage in the eyes of the athletic authorities of his school, although he didn't know it. This was quite as well perhaps, for the best of us are apt to suffer from a touch of egotism if we find that we are of sudden importance.

So it came about that one morning Archie and Mackay, among some scores of others, found awaiting them in the mail rack in the hall of their dormitory, a note from the athletic committee asking them to be in the gymnasium after afternoon recitations. By this they knew that they had been selected to compete in the inter-class contests. Archie was hardly surprised at the message as he felt that he was a logical contestant of the meet; but he was heartily glad that Mackay had been selected as an entry, for there had been some little doubt as to whether his chum's name would appear on the programme. Mackay was a football player, you know, and although he had been going in for distance-running in an informal way, being encouraged therein by Archie, still he didn't pose as a runner by any means. But Harper had, nevertheless, been keeping his eye on him, and had come to the conclusion that he

"could stay the distance," to use a bit of athletic slang.

The preparatory breakfast bell rang, and the couple reached the campus to find thereon a lot of other proud and happy lads who too, had heard from the committee. And the talking and laughing and clinking that ensued! Shouldering his way through the crowd came Evans, his face lit with a broad smile.

"I've had a note," he burst out. "I didn't really expect one after—after what happened last fall. Awfully good of Harper, isn't it?"

"Harper's awfully good—to himself," laughed back Archie, "if the committee hadn't sent to you, they'd been short of a good one."

Evans looked his thanks but didn't try to put his feelings in words. A boy's silence is often more eloquent than speech. It was so in this case.

Near the door of Weymouth Hall they found the Spud waiting. The little chap appeared to be worried and when he caught sight of them, came hurriedly forward.

"Why, what's the matter, Spud?" asked Archie, "you wear a face as if you'd heard a banshee."

"They've been telling me that you—and you," indicating Mackay and Archie, "will get some-

thing this afternoon, some punishment that will keep you away from eating with the rest of us; and make you work when we're having fun, and keep you on the run and jump all the time and that you'll be shown up before the school and a lot of people. And Oi'm that sorry, so Oi am." The Spud's underlip trembled as he spoke.

Mackay looked amusedly at the youngster for a moment and then as the facts of the case dawned on him, gave vent to a shriek of laughter. Archie laughed also, but controlled himself when he saw that the Spud looked hurt and indignant as Mackay continued to emit sounds of mirth.

"Whoever told you all that, was clinking you, little man," explained our hero. "We *shall* get something this afternoon, but it will be something pleasant. We shall be given our entries in the coming indoor meet. If we don't eat with the rest of you, it will be because we have to do so at the training table where they give us food that helps to put us in condition—makes us fit for doing athletic stunts, you know. We shall be working in the gym when the rest of you are on the campus, but that's a part of the game, and we don't kick at it by any means. As to our being kept on the run and jump all the time, that's more or less true, for we have

to practise for the runs and the hurdles—at least some of us will have to. About our being shown up to the school—why, we hope to be on the day of the meet, and we also hope to make a good showing at that. Now you know all about it, eh?"

The Spud's face had gradually cleared as Archie went on with his explanation and when the latter came to an end, he was positively beaming.

"Oi'm that glad, so Oi am," said he joyfully, almost repeating his former words, "and Oi'll lick the crowd of thim that told me—" He stopped suddenly as he caught the reproach in Archie's eye. "Oi mean that I feel like licking them but I won't."

"That's the stuff, Kiddo!" cried Archie. "Instead of licking them, clink them."

"What a lovely Peace Commissioner, our famous sprinter would have made." It was Parrot who voiced the assertion. "If ever—"

"There's a buttinsky contest, I'll enter and back you to the limit," interrupted Mackay.

"And you'd win," admitted Parrot with meek pride.

Then they all went in to breakfast.

CHAPTER XI

That afternoon and as soon as recitations were over, the lads who had been lucky enough to receive a summons from the athletic committee, made for the gymnasium, their progress thither being watched with good-natured envy by the less fortunate ones. There were nearly eighty young athletes, including representatives of the first, second, third, and fourth classes. A whole lot of old chums and athletic rivals of Archie's were there, including Allen of the second, the crack high and standing jumper of the junior classes; Oliver, of the first who had won the broad jump at the try-outs of the preceding fall; Devereux of the same class, a distance runner of great promise; Creasey, Hartop, Reynolds, Aubrey, Waterbury, Dodson, Beardsley, Brown, and Shotwell—all sprinters and good ones at that; Evarts and Watson, hurdlers, and more besides. And they were all in that happy frame of mind that is characteristic of the youthful athlete. The fifth class "men" —the only Donchesterians who were given that title—did not compete in the inter-class contests,

for it was theoretically supposed that they were capable of outdoing the members of any other class, which really wasn't so by any means.

Now, the forthcoming meeting was like most indoor athletic events in that it was made up chiefly of track contests. By this is meant running and hurdling. There were one or two field numbers on the programme, such as high jumps and standing jumps, but there was no high pole-vaulting, or hammer-throwing, or shot-putting, or work with the discus and the like. A gymnasium has its limitations in regard to affording protection to the spectators from accidents, and hence the barring of events that might bring trouble.

Because of all of these things, Harper, the track captain and his assistants were the prominent figures in connection with the meet. Assisting him were Conrad of the fifth whose specialty was the jumps, and Travers, who looked after the youngsters when they were in training. And it was these great men who met the chosen lads in the gym in order to advise the latter on what lay before them and to appoint them to the work for which they were the most suited.

Hallet of the fourth, who had studied stenography for amusement and had a fair knowledge of the art, took down some parts of Harper's

address to the gathering and later, transcribed his notes as follows:

"I shall not talk to you very much about your diet because you will be taken care of in that respect at the training table. But I put everybody here on his honor not to eat the things that are not served at that table on account of their being harmful to a fellow who is getting in condition. Heavy or 'flaky' pastry is bad for you, and so you'll have to shake Aunt Sally for the time being. So too, are sweets of any kind if you take them in an excessive quantity —candy, sugary drinks, pies, rich puddings and so forth. Personally, when I go in training, I either go without sugar in my tea or coffee or use just as little as I can. Don't stuff yourselves, even at the training table. A glutton will never turn out to be an athlete, try as hard as he may.

"I am glad to say that there are very few smokers among us and that these do not include many cigarette-fools. Usually they are called cigarette-fiends, but I like the word 'fool' better. Only a fool will inhale what he knows to be a slow poison that will rob him of wind, vigor and endurance. This is saying nothing about the look of a lad whose mouth is decorated by a cigarette. Such a chap is a mean-appearing fluffy-boy and I hope that you will remem-

ber my words when you come across one of the breed if you happen to meet him on the campus or elsewhere. But apart from cigarettes, tobacco in any form is harmful to the athlete because it interferes with his breathing apparatus; affects his heart and works on his nerves. I need hardly tell you that the nerves of an athlete are one of his chief assets—his most valuable possession. Without them and control of them, muscles are of no use. It is the control of the muscles through the nerves that counts on the track or on the field. If in a contest there are two men who are muscularly alike, the one with the nerve will win out easily. I'll go farther than that and say that a muscularly better man who has nerves that are less steady and reliable than are those of a weaker rival, will be defeated by the latter in a contest that calls for pluck or concentrated effort. The effect of tobacco is to 'soothe' the nerves, by which is meant that it induces a slight paralysis of their powers. Now, I hardly need tell you fellows that anything that does that much is bad for both the non-athlete and athlete, especially for the latter. So, don't smoke.

"A fellow who has anything wrong with his heart has no right to be in athletics. A sound heart is an absolute necessity for a chap who runs or jumps or puts the shot or does any kind

of athletic work. The important part that the heart plays in the scheme of an animal that is made for speed or spells of great exertion, is shown by the deer, whose heart is just double the size of that of an ox. The same kind of thing takes places in all other animals that can 'go.' Now, tobacco gives you heartburn, palpitation, 'tobacco-heart,' in short. Enough said, then, about its being bad stuff for the athlete.

"As to intoxicants, I'll hardly insult your intelligence by remarking that they and athleticism are sworn foes. One of the most famous men in the athletic world has this to say about the matter—I quote him word for word: 'Drinking must be discontinued entirely (by the athlete). He must religiously avoid beer, wine, or spirits if he would have that greatest of boons, a sound mind in a sound body, both of which are requisite for the athlete. A man who has developed a desire for drink and who cannot shake off the habit, is worse than a forlorn hope in an athletic sense. Training for such a man is impossible. Beer is very detrimental to the wind, brings on foulness of the stomach, the growth of fat, and thickens the mind. Brandy, whisky, and the like are apt to induce fever, lassitude, and false feeling or temporary energy —the most dangerous symptom of training.

Leaving out athletics on the one side, or presenting arguments on the other, the men who do not drink are the best men and the best athletes.' After this, I don't think that I need say anything more on the subject. But I will remark this: I don't believe that there is a boy present who drinks during the school term, and after the term is over, I want you to remember that which has just been said about intoxicants and if they are offered to you, to refrain from them for the sake of your athletic record and your personal welfare."

Harper gave more and equally good advice to the boys, his remarks being followed by some from Travers about training and what it called for on the part of those being trained. And finally, Harper gave out the names of the various events and those who were to take part in them; which, from the viewpoint of the listening lads, was the most interesting feature of the gathering.

After giving the lists of those who were to be entered for the senior relay race; the three-mile run; the high hurdles, the running high jump; and the standing broad jump, he passed on to the other events which included the forty-yard handicap dash; the low-hurdle race and the junior relay race, in each of which Archie and Evans were entered. In the first-named event,

Archie was scratch man, Evans being given a yard's allowance. In the second, they started even. Mackay was entered for the three-mile run, and he grinned expansively at Archie when Harper announced that fact.

"And now, boys," concluded the track captain, "I'm sure that you'll do your best in getting ready for the inter-class meet, for you all know that on its results will, to a great extent, depend the results of the Interscholastic Meet. I am greatly in hopes that this last will result in the dear old flag of Donchester being carried in triumph around the arena by those of you who have assisted in securing our school the right to do so!"

At this, there was an outburst of hearty cheering and there wasn't a boy present who didn't promise himself that if victory did not perch on the Donchester banner, it wouldn't be his fault that it failed to do so. And so the meeting came to an end and the enthusiastic lads began to disperse. But Archie hung around, however.

"You and the other fellows needn't wait for me," he said to Mackay, "I want to talk to Harper. Seems to me that there's a mistake somewhere. I'm no hurdler and I'm going to tell the captain so."

"I guess Harper thinks that you're one, or

he wouldn't have put you at the jumps," replied Mackay. "Hurry up, though, for I want to jabber distance-running with you when you get through."

The track captain was making for his private room that opened off the gymnasium when he felt a tug at his sleeve and followed by a "Beg pardon, sir, but can I speak with you for a moment?"

"Certainly, Archie," he said heartily. "Come right in."

He opened the door and led the way into the comfortable room with its mission and dull green furniture, its open fire and its sage-green walls decorated with boxing gloves, fencing foils, masks, gauntlets, racquets, and dozens of athletic trophies. And Archie regarding these things, thought, boy-like, that to have a room so decked all to one's self, must be the limit of human happiness.

"Sit down, I want to have a word with Travers and then—but here he is."

The door opened again to admit the grizzled trainer, whose lined face lit up as he saw Archie and who buried the latter's hand in his own big, brown paw in a very warm fashion indeed. For Travers was not only immensely proud of Archie because of his remarkable athletic abilities, but in addition, he liked the little chap

greatly for the sake of the good qualities that he possessed—his manliness, truthfulness, and sincerity. The trainer had had to do with many hundreds of boys in his time, and he had discovered that the most brilliant athletes were the owners of the qualities just named. Those of you who have been in training will understand the relation between athletic success and these same virtues.

"Now, Archie, what can I do for you?" asked Harper, after the trio were seated and were toasting their toes before the blazing fire.

The boy flushed and hesitated somewhat. "I've never taken part in a hurdle race, sir," he managed to say at last, "and I thought perhaps that you didn't know this, or that I might have said something that made you think that I could hurdle."

"No, neither reason influenced me in making you a contestant in the event," replied the captain. "The real reason why I selected you was, that most sprinters make good hurdlers. I'm right in this, eh, Travers?"

"Quite right," replied the veteran. "It's like this, you see," he went on, speaking to our hero, "a hurdle race *is won between the hurdles.* That is to say, it is the speed that is shown on the flat that counts; not the way that the hurdles are taken. Or to put it another way, it's the

sprints between the hurdles that do the trick."

"But—" began Archie and then he stopped suddenly. It occurred to him that that "but" made it seem as if he was starting an argument with the man who knew so much, while he knew so comparatively little, about the mysteries of athletics.

"Go on, Archie," said Harper encouragingly. "You were going to ask something. Out with it."

"I was going to say to Mr. Travers that there must be a whole lot to learn about the way, the right way, to get over the hurdles," said the youngster with an effort, "and because I don't know what that way is, I thought that—that—" He paused awkwardly.

"You thought that you'd better ask us about it." Travers's weatherbeaten face wrinkled into a good-natured smile as he spoke. "Well, that's what I like, Hartley. The boy who is so thick that he doesn't know enough to ask, or the boy who is so stuck on himself that he thinks he knows it all, isn't likely to win either bars or a medal."

The trainer alluded to the Donchester custom of rewarding winning athletes of the first, second, third, and fourth classes with silver or bronze bars, while gold or silver medals went to

the victors of the fifth. So that if a boy was a consistent athlete, he stood a chance of being possessed of a handsome trophy of four bars and a gold disk on the completion of his school course.

"Yes, sir," said Archie respectfully. He had been trained at home to accept without question the statements of authorities much older than himself. Every boy hasn't been so trained, more's the pity. The "fresh" lad who has little or no respect or reverence for years and the experience that they bring with them, should either be thumped or pitied—perhaps the latter.

"Oh, we'll teach you how to take the hurdles, never fear," interjected Harper. "Two, or at the most, three weeks of faithful work, will make you a jumper. A sprinter's muscles are such that he usually makes a clever hurdler. Isn't that so, Travers?"

An emphatic nod from the old man replied to the query. "Mr. Seymour will tell you as much, if you write to him, Hartley. I'm told that he is a good 'un at the high hurdles, himself."

The allusion was to Horace Seymour, the crack Yale sprinter and Archie's uncle. While the boy was a born runner, yet much of his sprinting form and more of his technical ex-

pertness were alike due to the coaching and advice of the uncle. Seymour never tired of assisting his nephew to develop his speed and endurance, and the hints that he sent him from time to time were carefully studied and acted on by our hero.

Archie now rose, "Thank you, Captain Harper, and you, Mr. Travers," he said as he reached for his cap; "I'm much obliged for what you have told me. And—and"—the words stuck in his throat—"do you mind if I say something else?"

Harper patted the boy on the shoulder, "Certainly not. Go right ahead."

"Well, then," blurted Archie, "Collins, last year, sprained his ankle pretty badly while practising at the hurdles. Hannigan strained a tendon of his leg and Boyle of the fourth twisted his side so much that he was in the Shambles—I mean the hospital—for nearly three weeks—all through the hurdles. Of course, I'll do whatever you want me to, but if I'm knocked out at the hurdles, I shan't be able to sprint. I'm not afraid of a tumble or a sprain, you know," he added hastily, "but I want to save myself for the dashes, all the same."

Travers looked at the lad with undisguised admiration, and was in the act of opening his

mouth to express it, when a look from the captain, stayed him.

"You're right in thinking of these things," said Harper gravely, "but there's little or no danger at the low hurdles provided that you follow instructions. I needn't tell you that there is a right and a wrong way to do everything, including hurdling. Trouble in the latter case is almost always the result of going at it by the wrong route. We'll show you the right route. Travers and myself talked this thing over before we gave you the entry. You may be sure that we wouldn't take any unnecessary chances with those clever legs of yours."

The tone of the last sentence was such that Archie flushed with pleasure. It's nice to be appreciated by those whose opinions are worth having.

And then the boy bade the young captain and the old trainer a bright good-afternoon and running up the steps of the gymnasium, raced across the campus to where his chums were awaiting him.

"Prettiest action and cleanest stride that I ever saw on a boy," remarked Travers as he watched Archie from the window of the room.

"That's true," agreed Harper, "and to think that those legs belong to Donchester. For

heaven's sake don't let them come to grief over the hurdles."

The trainer looked at the captain aggrievedly. "Do you think that I think so little of the school that I'd let him as much as blister one of his blessed heels, sir?" he asked.

"I don't," answered Harper in so convincing a tone, that the frown on Travers's face disappeared instantly.

CHAPTER XII

During the night that followed there came a thick, soft snowstorm and when, in the morning, Archie and Mackay looked out of their dormitory window, the campus wore a fleecy white overcoat; the great elms and maples that fringed it were laden with snowy foliage, and the roofs and towers of the school buildings were crowned with "angels' feathers," as some of the boys called the downfall. So far, the weather, while quite sharp on one or two occasions, hadn't frozen the Broad hard enough to bear the collective weight of two or three hundred sturdy boys, and furthermore, it had been snowless or nearly so. At all events, the clouds hadn't been sufficiently liberal with the "feathers" to enable Donchester to indulge in one of its jolliest annual customs, which was the Snowfight, in which the first and the fourth were pitted against the second and third classes.

Of course, there were liable to be fights and fun of an impromptu sort at any time when the sky furnished the ammunition; but *the* Snowfight was a sort of official function in which the

warring forces were marshaled by captains chosen long before the day of combat; and which was waged on orderly and recognized lines. Also, the faculty and its friends witnessed the affray and cheered on the combatants.

So then, when Mackay saw the unsullied expanse below him and noted that the fall had been a deep one, he emitted a yell, nay, many yells of sheer joy. At this Archie asked him into what part of his anatomy he had stuck a pin. "Only a pinhead would ask that question, or a half-fledged minny," replied the ready tongue of Mac. "Look outside and see for yourself. Isn't that enough to make you chortle with exceeding loudness?"

Then it came to our hero that long before the holidays, he had heard the older boys tell of the joys of the fight, while they impatiently watched for the coming of the clouds that would make the fray possible. But the winter was of the "green" sort, and so vacation time came and the clashing of the rival armies was deferred until the reassembling of Donchesterians.

Archie's eyes sparkled as he surveyed the dazzling landscape outside.

"This is fine, and isn't it lucky that it's half-day recitations," he cried enthusiastically.

"Yes, siree," responded Mackay as he caught

up a couple of towels and made for the lavatory; "get a move on you, Archie, and we'll loosen up our throwing arms before breakfast."

Ten minutes later, and the two youngsters, glowing with laughter and exercise, were busy pelting each other and a lot of other boys who, like themselves, had accepted the invitation of the snow. Oh, it was glorious fun! And just as the storm of flying snowballs was at its height, there loomed large in the midst of it the form of the Cherub.

Immediately, the missiles ceased flying all ways at once and instead, the fire—if you can speak of snowballs as fire—was concentrated on the bulky minny! He made a gallant effort to reply in kind, but the odds were too great. So, as he wouldn't retreat, he covered his face with his hands and stood stock-still while the snow-globes plastered him from head to foot.

"It's about time that we helped the Cherub, isn't it?" gasped Archie as he saw the plight of the young giant. Good as Archie's wind usually was, it had been pretty well tried by the strenuous work of the preceding ten minutes, and hence the gasp.

"Y-e-s," panted Mackay. "Wait—till—I get some breath and we'll help—him—out." He paused for a second or so, and then, straightening up, yelled, "Ho! Vigilantes, to

the rescue! Rescue, my hearties!" And followed by Archie he rushed to the side of the Cherub, who by this time, looked like a real snow-man, so thickly was he covered with the snowballs.

In response to Mackay's cry, a dozen lads ranged themselves by his side and that of the Cherub and began what the military men would call "a heavy and sustained fusillade" on the attacking party. The Cherub gave himself a shake, thereby relieving his person of a half-ton, more or less, of snow, and joined in the defense with much vigor. His long arm and his weight-throwing practice made his missiles things to be avoided, for where they hit, they stung, going all to pieces with the impact, so hearty was the force that impelled them.

But the attacking party were nothing loath, and replied to the defenders' "fire" with interest. And so the battle continued until—clang-clankety! clang-clinkety! clang! went the preparatory bell. Instantly the attack weakened, the defense slackened and with a few more scattering throws, the fight ceased altogether. Then the whilom foes made for Weymouth Hall, brushing the snow off themselves and each other as they trotted over the blanketed campus. And oh, the rosy faces and the bubbling jollity of the crowd! And oh, the appetites that they

all had! And oh, the way that the coffee and corn cakes and cereals; eggs and toast and bacon disappeared down their throats! As Parrot put it, "the visible supply of eats became invisible in a coincident ratio to the snowfall." But then, you know by this time what Parrot was.

The rest of the morning went all too slowly for the impatient youngsters, but for all that, there was mighty little "slumping" at recitations. They knew that a "slump" meant that the slumpee would be a "merry worker," while his more fortunate companions were enjoying the strenuous delights of the Snowfight. It is hardly necessary to explain that the "merry workers" were the unlucky ones who were kept in the recitation halls while the others were on recess or half-day vacation.

But even the most tedious hours must come to an end, and so at length, the signal for dismissal was given; lunch hour for once seemed all too long, and finally, the lads marshaled by the monitors, were lined up on the campus in the order of classes already named and the preliminaries to the battle were begun.

The first and the fourth classes were united for the purposes of the fray because this arrangement offset the advantages possessed by the combined second and third classes. In

other words, the small boys of the first got the benefit of the muscles of the big boys of the fourth, the union being theoretically equal to the combined prowess of the two other classes.

The plan of the fight was always this:—the first and fourth occupied a "fort" from which the second and third tried to dislodge them. Such dislodging could only be done with snowballs, no shoving, wrestling, or touching of the persons of the combatants of either side being allowed. There were two "periods" of three-quarters of an hour each, with fifteen minutes between, during which the opposing forces were allowed to make up an additional supply of ammunition in the shape of snowballs, and the fort defenders could also repair their defenses if the latter had suffered from the attackers. Three members of the athletic committee were appointed to watch the fight and decide upon the winners when the whistle sounded for the cessation of hostilities. And—this wasn't by any means the least pleasant part of the affair—hot chocolate and raisin-cake were served in Weymouth Hall to the soldiers when the battle was over.

So, when the word was given, the first class began to make snowballs as if their lives depended on it, they being assisted in the work by some of the boys of the fourth. The remain-

der of the fourth started in to build the fort with the help of snow-shovels. It was simply a circular snow wall about three feet in height and a couple of feet thick, and enclosing a space big enough for all the defenders to move without jostling each other. Right in the centre of this space was piled the reserve ammunition, while at the side of each fighter was another heap of the same. The defenders were divided into four divisions, each under the command of a captain who was a fourther. These captains again, were subject to the orders of a colonel, who on this particular occasion was one Frank Merrill, a capital football player and a fine chap in general. It was the duty of the colonel to stand on a snow-pile so that he could see what was going on, and direct the captains how to handle their forces. Because he was thus conspicuously placed and was also the "brains of the defense" he was the target for a large proportion of the snowballs of the enemy. Outside of the fun that it afforded, the Snowfight was of benefit to the boys on the score of its teaching them the value of discipline and concerted effort to a given end. They didn't know that they were being thus taught, but they were.

Well, both sides went to work making balls until their faces streamed with perspiration

and their arms ached. The fort was quickly completed and the ammunition piles rose like miniature pyramids. Merrill divided his forces into their respective divisions and Archie found that he was associated with the Cherub and the Spud for which he was glad. The big minny was one vast smile at the prospect of the coming combat and the blue eyes of the Spud had the light of battle in them. Archie, too, looked radiant.

"Sure Oi'm that sorry that Mackay is ag'in' us," whispered the Spud to Archie. "'Tis Oi that would like to have him fighting with us."

"Well, bang him in the ear with a big one, just to let him know that you are thinking of him," laughed our hero.

Emmet looked reproachful. "'Tis no way of showing a liking, that way of yours. If 'twas Snaggy 'twould be different. But Oi'll not lift me hand ag'in' Mackay," said he decisively.

"You blessed kid you, don't you know that Mackay is just as likely as not to go for you? It's all fun, anyhow."

The Spud was revolving a reply when the bugle of the arbiters was heard sounding the "assembly." Phelps, the captain of the division in which Archie was, came bustling along.

"Get to your places, lads," he called. "Wait till they get close before you begin to throw. Don't waste your shots. Take aim every time before you let go. Pick your man. Keep cool and don't try to get rid of as many balls as you can, but try to make as many hits as you can. Aim at their faces, not where they put their lunches."

Again the bugle rang out, this time its clear, inspiring notes meaning, "Get ready." A pause, and then, "Tra-la, tra-la. Tra la-la-la-la-la. La-la!" which was the signal for the opening of the fight.

With a cheer the bulk of the attacking forces that had assembled at the south end of the campus advanced at a run and in extended order. The remainder was held in reserve by Campbell who was in command. The fighting line began using up its ammunition before it got well within range of the fort, with the result that it wasn't long before it had to send back for more snowballs, its "fire" almost ceasing in consequence. Merrill realized the situation and ordered the captains in the fort to have their men concentrate their aim on the few of the enemy who still stood their ground. This was done with the result that the enemy took to its heels to avoid being smothered by the

tempest of snowballs that was directed at it. Whereat the fort warriors cheered lustily.

Once more the attack advanced, and this time it used more discretion. Not a ball was thrown until the onset was within a few yards of the fort and then at a shout from the captains, a hurricane of snowballs was directed at the defenders. These latter, heartened as they were by the first repulse of the enemy, replied with interest and the fight waged furious. The Spud was in his glory. The Cherub worked like a Trojan, and when he concentrated on a group of the enemy, there was a sudden scattering. Repeated whacks from snowballs are like the stream from a fire-hose. They don't hurt you, but you don't feel disposed to stay around and argue the situation with them. And, as I have told you, the Cherub certainly could throw with force and accuracy. As for Archie, he was enjoying himself to the full, working away in that cool, thorough manner that was characteristic of him and his. Twice or thrice he was conscious of the fact that somebody on the side of the attack had it in for him, for on these occasions, a series of snowballs would hit him in succession. Once when he was in the act of opening his mouth to speak to the Cherub, he didn't complete the

sentence for the reason that a ball caught him fairly on the gums completely "occupying the orifice in his countenance," as Parrot said subsequently, when describing the incident. In other words, Archie's mouth was filled with snow.

But as he coughed and sputtered in consequence, he caught sight of the face of Mackay outside the fort walls and that face was grinning joyously. Wherefore, he knew whence came the "pill" and those that had preceded it in the manner told. And he caught up a handy snowball and demolished the grin at once.

And now the attack, having spent its force and ammunition supplies, once more wavered and finally retreated to its end of the campus amid the jeering cheers of the fort warriors. There Campbell gathered around him his captains and began to harangue them, while the fighters got ready a new supply of snowballs.

"We'll have to watch 'em this time," declared Merrill to the captains; "I'll bet that they'll try to rush us or put up some trick on us. Keep your men well in hand, fellows; don't let 'em waste ball or powder and be sure that you do as I tell you the moment that you hear me give orders. I rather fancy I know what they are up to."

Merrill had been in three previous snow-

A HURRICANE OF SNOWBALLS WAS DIRECTED AT THE DEFENDERS.
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fights, you must remember, and was therefore a veteran at the game, up to all the dodges that could be legitimately played in connection with it.

And now for the third time the second and third classes advanced to the attack, and the boys in the fort saw that they were each carrying as many snowballs as their arms would hold.

"See who's going to tackle our side of the fort," laughed the Cherub as he pointed a long forefinger to the oncoming forces.

"Snaggy and his bunch!" chuckled Archie. "Well, we'll try to make things pleasant for the young gentlemen. Eh, Spud?"

The Spud's eyebrows were drawn down into a straight line while his thin nostrils were dilated like those of a hound that gets the scent of a deer, as he followed the direction of the giant minny's finger and saw the bully and his supporters.

"Oi'm going to go for that black baste and no one else," said he, half to himself, "and 'tis meself is wishing that we had sticks instid of snowballs to do the fighting with."

"Here, you little wasp, quit that," called Archie. "No bad blood, please. This is fun and not real fight that we're having to-day."

"Ye don't know how he hurted my arms, the

mucky spalpeen," replied the Spud. "If you did, ye'd want to break the head of him, same as I do. And—and he said things about the Oirish, so he did."

"That's all right, old man. I say things about the Irish, too, but it's nice things—especially since I've known you." It was Archie that spoke and he put his arm around the small chap's neck as he did so.

The Spud with a mighty effort kept back the tears that the remembrance of the affront to his beloved country had almost caused to flow.

"Oi like you, so Oi do, but as for that mealy-mick-malty-mouse there—" Archie let out a peal of laughter and squeezed the youngster's neck still tighter. "One of these evenings, Spud," he said, "you must come to our room and teach us—Mackay and myself—some of those queer names that you call people you don't like. They lay out anything I ever heard before."

"Attention. Get ready. Here they come. Give it to them!" It was Phelps who thus shouted to his men, and the sentence was scarcely out of his mouth when the attackers sent in their first volley of snowballs and the renewal of the fight was on.

When you are trying to dodge a simultaneous dozen of snowballs and are endeavoring

to repay the kind attentions that the owners of the missiles are showing you, you haven't much time to notice anything that is going on around you—except the snowballs. But Archie did see, however, that just before and immediately after the opening of the attack, Snaggy and his pals were in consultation and that they had had their eyes on himself and his companions. It therefore did not surprise him that they concentrated their fire on him, the Spud, and the Cherub, ignoring all the rest of the defenders. But he was somewhat surprised to feel that such of their snowballs as struck him, did so with a weighty sort of violence that was in direct contrast of the soft thud of those thrown by others. Yet he hadn't time to solve the puzzle, being too busy trying to give back as good as he received. But as he rose from a stooping position—a pile of ammunition being at his feet—a snowball from the Snaggyites caught him such a thump on the cheekbone that he staggered again. Wiping off the snow with his hand, he was surprised to see that member covered with blood. "Those duffers have been making up snowballs from frozen snow," thought he, "and a lump of ice in one of them has cut my face. They ought to be more careful." Archie overlooked the fact that there had been no frost for many days. Indeed, the

night before had been particularly soft and bland.

However, he knelt down so as to get in the shelter of the fort wall, pulled out his handkerchief and proceeded to staunch the flow of blood. At this instant, Merrill shouted to Phelps to rush his company to the rear of the fort, which was now threatened by one of the reserve detachments of the hostiles that, under cover of the frontal attack, had been sent by Campbell to out-flank the defenders. It was this manœuvre that had been anticipated by Merrill, and against which he had been guarding.

"Come on, fellows," shouted Archie to those around him and filling his arms from the remnants of the pile at his feet, turned to obey the orders of Phelps. The Spud was in the act of imitating Archie's example, when a whizzing snowball struck him full on the temple. The sound of the blow was so sharp that Archie instinctively stopped and turned. As he did so, he saw the Spud clasp his hands to his head, and heard him mutter a faint and agonized cry. Then he wavered, his legs gave way beneath him and he sank to the ground senseless. At the same instant our hero caught sight of Snaggy with an evil grin on his face,

calling the attention of his followers to the fallen Spud.

Archie, forgetting all about the fight that was now raging right around the fort, ran back and bent over the poor little minny whom he tried to bring back to consciousness. The Spud had fallen face downwards and as Archie lifted him up so as to get him on his back, he saw on the boy's forehead just back of and above the left eye, an ugly bruise that was rapidly turning to a livid hue. Close by the Spud were lying the remnants of the snowball that had done the mischief. Mechanically, Archie stretched out his hand and picked up the largest fragment. It was hard and heavy, so much so indeed that Archie was prompted to examine it closely. As he did so, an angry flush came to his cheek and his eyes blazed his indignation. "The miserable curs!" he said to himself; "no wonder that the Spud was knocked out. And my cheek—"

"What's wrong here, Hartley?" It was Phelps who spoke, having run back to investigate when he caught sight of the senseless Spud and Archie kneeling beside the former.

"Some of those—those beasts—Snaggy and his herd—have been using rocks for the cores of their snowballs, and the Spud has been

knocked out by one of them," burst out Archie savagely.

"Well"— began Phelps and stopped short —"but you're bleeding like a stuck pig. What's the matter with your cheek?"

"One of the Snaggy compliments," answered our hero grimly, "but don't mind me. Get the doctor for this poor kid. He's been hit on the thinnest part of his skull and maybe he's badly hurt." This remark showed that Archie's physiological studies had not been in vain. And he began to rub the injured forehead softly with a handful of snow.

Phelps sprang to his feet, glanced at his fighters who were still busy repelling the attack on the northern end of the fort, darted forward, pulled the Cherub out of the fray and rushed him up to Merrill. The latter listened to the brief statement of Phelps and then pulling his handkerchief out of his pocket, turned to the Cherub and said:

"Here, bolt for Dr. Price. You'll find him on the gymnasium steps with the committee. Tell him to hurry here as the Spud has been hurt. Wave the handkerchief as you make the dash; the other chaps will let up on you when they see a flag of truce!"

The Cherub needed no second bidding. In a couple of jumps he was by the side of the

fort wall over which he lifted his long legs without touching it, and, waving the "white flag" vigorously sped toward the gymnasium at a very respectable rate of speed indeed. A few seconds after his arrival at the doctor's side, the bugle rang out "Cease firing." The order was obeyed forthwith, and speculation as to its cause was increased when the crowd saw the physician and the committee rushing to the fort for all that they were worth, the Cherub in the lead.

Just as the party entered the fort, the eyelids of the Spud fluttered, he sighed, a tremor ran through his frame and he opened his eyes wearily.

"Hello, Hartley," said he in a weak voice, "what's the matter? Oi—Oi feel so sick and so queer."

"You'll be all right in a minute, Sonny. You got a crack on the noodle with a snowball and you've been to bye-bye by reason of it." It was the physician who spoke. "Never seen me before, have you?" This was in reply to the question in the lad's eyes. "Well, I'm the school doctor. Now we're going to take you to my office and there we'll fix you up and make you as fit as a fiddle in no time. I think that we'll carry you. Walking isn't good for a chap who's just had his brains knocked out." And

he laughed so cheerily that a wan smile lit up the pale face of the Spud.

All the boys liked Doctor Price because he had such a cheerful way with him that made them feel good even when they were feeling beastly bad, as Jimmy Hall once said when he was having a broken arm set. Cheerfulness is the sugar of life, you know. It will make the sourest of things taste sweet—and we all like sweets. Therefore, let us always have a stock of cheerfulness handy.

A couple of fourth class boys made a Queen Anne's chair—of course you know what that is—with their hands and wrists on which the Spud was lifted. Archie walked behind to steady him and so the procession started for the office, the door of which was closed in the faces of the curious, but not before Mackay had gotten from Archie a brief recital of the facts of the case. Whereupon the former straightway told the story of the snowballs with the stone cores to the rest of his and Archie's intimates. And these—But we don't want to anticipate.

"You two boys come in," said Dr. Price as Archie and the Cherub were preparing to follow the others. "That face of yours, Hartley, looks as if it would be all the better for a sponge and some sticking-plaster. Anyhow, I

want to hear from both of you how this happened?"

And so, while the Spud was being overhauled and given some stuff to pick him up, Archie related the happenings that the reader already knows.

"Have you one of those snowballs with you—no, no, I don't mean that," the doctor corrected himself hastily as he saw the amused look on Archie's face—"what I do mean to say is, have you a specimen of the stones that were used by these—these ruffianly cowards?" He frowned as he spoke, for he despised hoodlums and was very jealous of the honor of his school. You who read this are, I hope, of the same frame of mind as was the doctor in this instance.

Archie produced a couple of the rocks from his pocket. "I think, Doctor, that you'll find plenty more of them about the place in the fort where the Spud—I mean Emmet—and myself stood," he blurted out.

"Why?" The physician looked at him keenly.

Archie flushed with embarrassment. "I would rather not answer that question, sir, if you don't mind." Sure as he was that Snaggy and his crowd had deliberately prepared the dangerous missiles for the express benefit of

himself and the other two boys, he hated to say anything that had a flavor of snitching about it.

"All right, Hartley," replied the doctor with a good-natured laugh, and much to Archie's relief, "I'll not push the question. But I think that I've formed a pretty good idea as to who these rascals are, and their motive for using stony-hearted snowballs. The matter won't rest here, though." He turned to the Spud. "And now, Emmet, I think that you're able to go to your room. Hartley and this young son of Anak will help you get there. Be thankful that you feel no worse than you do. The stone hit you on a place where you might have been seriously damaged. Lie down when you reach your study and I'll get you excused from recitations for to-morrow."

"Thank you, sor," said the Spud gratefully. "Me head is spinning yet and Oi'll be glad to rest it, sor."

So with his small arms linked in those of his friends, the Spud was helped to the study that he shared with a second-class boy, and after being deposited on his couch and a blanket thrown over him forthwith fell fast asleep.

"Cherub, you get back to the fight," whispered Archie as he saw the heavy eyes of the Spud closing. "I'll stay here a bit and look

after this kid in case he wakes up and wants anything."

"But say, Hartley, this isn't fair to you, you know—" began the Cherub.

"You get before I chuck this *up* at you," said our hero softly as he grabbed a baseball bat that stood handily in a corner. "Get, you Goliath, get!"

And the Cherub went, and even as he opened the door of the study, there came floating in the roar of the renewed battle. At this, Archie sighed wistfully.

CHAPTER XIII

Mackay, Parrot, Curtis, Evans, and some of the Vigilantes took counsel together as they walked slowly down the campus after leaving the doctor's office. Their consultation was to the end of devising an appropriate punishment for Snaggy. Mackay and Curtis voted for licking him good and plenty, to use the words of the latter. Parrot favored laying the evidence of the stone snowballs before the fifth class grievance committee, which body, as has been told in the first book of this series, had the power of "sending to Coventry," "giving a sign," "cutting out," and so forth, any boy who had seriously offended against gentlemanly behavior or school tradition. Snaggy, it will be remembered, already had a "sign" on account of the way in which he had brutally bullied a minny. The "sign" was a gesture that eloquently indicated the nature of the offense and it was used by the schoolmates of its owner, when the latter did something that warranted his disgraceful action being brought to his memory. But the other boys were strictly forbidden to make the "sign" lightly

or needlessly—or to put it another way—they were not allowed to rub it in without due and proper provocation.

Evans sided with Parrot in the discussion, while the rest of the crowd were divided in their beliefs as to what was the best to be done.

"Tell you what," croaked Parrot finally, "we won't do anything at all until we hear more from Archie. After dinner to-night, all of you come round to Aunt Sally's—it's the last chance that some of you will have to visit her for three weeks as the training table begins to-morrow—and I'll blow off to goodies while we talk this thing over. Archie then being present, maybe the thirst for blood from which some of you now suffer, won't be so fierce when it's allayed with fudge and real Virginian peanut brittle and—oh, yes!—Auntie has tried her hand at the Spud's coweyes."

"Yum! yum!" cried Mackay, "Parrot, thou hast won me over to the peaceful plan of punishing Snaggy—you and the coweyes!"

"I charge thee curb thy appetite—" began Parrot in his usual declamatory manner.

"No," broke in Curtis, "he won't curb *that,* but he'll put a bit between his teeth—many bits of candy."

"Whoopee!" yelled Mackay, "listen to the prairie punner; the wit of the wild and woolly;

the sage of the sage-brush regions; the—" He ceased suddenly, for from the further side of the fort, that he and his party had now reached, came Snaggy and his followers.

Mackay hesitated for a moment while the angry blood rushed to his face. Then he stepped forward in advance of the others. Snaggy halted and looked at him scowlingly. Whereupon, Mackay raised his right hand to the level of his mouth, spread out the fingers fan-wise, closed them into a clenched fist and smote himself lightly on the lips.

He had given Snaggy the latter's sign of disgrace!

Instantly four or five of the Vigilantes advanced and imitated him. Evans and Parrot hung back.

For a few moments following the giving of the sign, Snaggy and his pals stood motionless, the face of the former distorted by shame and anger. Then that which he intended to be a defiant smile, bared the stumps in his gums and he turned to make a remark to Skiddy that was plainly uncomplimentary to the Vigilantes. Just then the bugle sounded the "assembly."

As the two groups of boys broke into a run for the south end of the campus, Mackay sent a parting verbal dumdum at Snaggy thus:

"You and your party keep stones out of

your snowballs, or we'll give you more than the sign when we get through with the fight."

Snaggy made no answer but shot a glance at Mackay that told of the hate that was in his heart. And as Snaggy wasn't what you would call handsome at the best of times and as furthermore nothing makes the face seem so homely as unwarranted hatred for another, why, he now looked positively hideous.

A description of the remainder of the fight may be boiled down thus: Archie didn't appear again during the afternoon for the Spud got restless and feverish, waking at uneasy intervals and drinking thirstily when he did so. So our hero elected to stay with the little chap.

Towards the end of the first period, the attacking force, by a series of lively rushes, managed to rout the defenders of the fort, driving them outside its walls and chasing them over the campus.

Score, Attackers 1. Defenders 0.

In the second period, the tide of battle flowed first in one direction and then in the other, during which the Cherub covered himself with glory and his adversaries with plenty of snow. And Barnard, captain of the junior baseball team, noting the accuracy and ginger of the big minny's throws, then and there determined to try him out as a pitcher at the earliest opportu-

nity. Also, and to the Cherub's great joy, he on more than one occasion, managed to put a snow plaster all over Snaggy's countenance, much to the discomfort and rage of the latter. At the completion of the second period, the defenders still held the fort, while the attackers were hovering around it apparently not a bit anxious to come to close quarters.

Score, Attackers 1. Defenders 1. Consequently a draw.

With a cheer that shook the snow off some of the nearer maples, the boys hailed the announcement of the umpires in a manner that showed that it met with their full approval. Then came a rush for the gymnasium lavatories; there was sluicing-off of hands and faces, slicking down of mussed up hair and a trooping to Weymouth Hall, the tables of which were laden with big baskets filled with delicious raisin-cake and steaming urns of fragrant chocolate. And such cake, too! Not a stingy raisin here and there, you know, but "four to a square inch," as Mackay declared, "with lovely shavings of candied lemon peel between to keep the raisins in place." And the chocolate! Parrot—who, as has been said, was strong on mythology—asserted that it was hot nectar straight from the kettles of the Hesperides. At which Curtis asked him what

authority he had for stating that there were kettles in the resort of the gods in question. Whereupon Parrot read him a brief lecture on the evil of casting doubt on the assertions of the wise and learned.

Just as the youngsters were taking their first mouthful and first sip, Archie entered the Hall and made for his seat beside Mackay. He was hailed joyfully by his chums while two baskets of cake and three cups of chocolate were simultaneously pushed toward him.

"Say, Archie," said Mackay as he eyed our hero, "that's a peach of a mouse that you've got on your cheek." He lightly touched the crossed slips of sticking plaster that adorned the other's countenance.

"Isn't it shocking, the way that the younger generation indulge in vulgar slang?" moaned Parrot. "It's enough to make a guy throw a fit of the pip." He eyed Mac and Evans sternly.

"Stop your clinking, all of you, and pass the chocolate," commanded Archie.

This was done.

"Shame that you missed most of the fun, Arch, and all through that—that ape of a Snags. How's the Spud?" It was Mackay who spoke between mouthfuls of cake.

"Dr. Price came in to see him after the fight

was over, and—well, he's ordered him to be taken to the hospital." Archie's tone was one of concern.

"Whe-e-w," whistled Curtis. "I'm sure sorry to hear that. And the Snag bunch will be sorrier when they are called on to explain their cold-storage geological specimens. But the taste of the name of that herd spoils the flavor of the cake. Suppose we omit further mention of the ornery critters until the pow-wow at Aunt Sally's to-night?"

"What powwow?" asked Archie.

Whereupon he was told of the Parrot's suggestion.

"Of course, I'm with you fellows in whatever you do," said Archie in reply, "but if I were you, I'd wait until we know what the faculty is going to do about this thing. Dr. Price, as he was leaving the Spud's room, told me that he was going to make a full report to Dr. Pardee, and he said something about somebody finding himself in serious trouble if the Spud didn't improve. So if Snaggy is expelled or 'cut out' we needn't bother with him."

To be 'cut out' was to be sent away from the school for a term and in disgrace.

"The speedy sprinter from Swiftville speaks wisdom," spouted Parrot. "But that needn't prevent this brilliant assemblage from gather-

ing at Aunt Sally's in order to partake of my hospitality. What say you, my bold buckawoos?"

"I'm with you for one," declared Mackay, "but oh, I wish that I'd left just one of the compartments of my hold just a little bit empty!"

"You'll be hungry again in an hour or so, Mac," chuckled Archie.

"I hope so," replied Mackay earnestly.

"And we'll chew a round of coweyes in silence in memory of the Spud," suggested Parrot.

"I certain think 'twould be better to chew them in your mouth," said Curtis in a tone of mild remonstrance.

"Oh, rankly grows the Spanish moss upon the southern oak,
And when the Kansas prairies are freed from winter's yoke,
Oh, rankly sprout the rattlesnakes, the cacti, Holy Smoke!
For ranker than these nasty things, is a home-made Kansas joke."

chanted Parrot.

Just then one of the hall monitors came to the table.

"Hartley," said he, "Professor Ridgeley

would like to see you at the rooms when you have finished here, that is, if you have no other engagements."

"All right, Saunders. Please tell him I'll be there," said Archie, while his face grew rosy-red, and Mackay began to giggle.

"I wonder if Professor Ah will be alone or if —if other members of the family will greet our wounded hero," mused Mackay, addressing the others.

Archie's face had now lost the blush and his eyes sparkled mischievously.

"Did I ever tell you fellows why Mac was so anxious to quit football and turn distance runner this term?" he asked demurely.

There came a chorus of "Nos," supplemented with a burst of, "Do tell us."

"Well," began Archie slowly, "it was like this—" But he never finished the sentence for at this juncture, Mackay made the Donchester sign of surrender. This was the extension of the right arm, the fist being nearly closed with the knuckles up. The gesture was supposed to represent that of the conquered in the act of handing his sword, hilt forward, to the conqueror, and it commemorated an incident of the Civil War in which an ex-Donchesterian, a famous soldier, after routing a supe-

rior force, received the weapon of the opposing and defeated general.

"As Mac doesn't seem to want me to talk, I won't—unless he sets the example," grinned Archie. "And now I'm going to titivate up a bit before I go to the Professor's." He rose.

"Remember me to all of 'em, especially Mildred," said Curtis with a chuckle.

Archie opened his mouth to answer, thought better of it, closed it with a snap, and with his cheeks again rivaling the hue of the winter sunset outside, left the hall, followed by a burst of good-natured laughter, Mackay's cheerful cackle rising clear above that of the others.

CHAPTER XIV

Archie sped to his room, changed his collar, took a pat at his hair with the brush, frowned a trifle as he eyed his damaged cheek in the mirror and then started at an easy lope for the faculty quarters. Running was so natural to him that he usually used that gait in preference to walking when circumstances and surroundings permitted.

He found Professor Ridgeley awaiting him, in the library. The grave face of the professor lit up cordially as he held out his hand to the lad.

"We—ah—Mrs. Ridgeley and myself have —ah—hardly had an—opportunity of greeting you since—ah—your—ah—return to school, Hartley," said he, his speech justifying his nickname of "Professor Ah" more than ever. "But what—ah—is the matter with your cheek?"

"Scratched by a hard snowball this afternoon, sir," replied Archie truthfully.

"Yes—ah—of course, of course. It was—ah—about this snowball matter that—ah—I

have—ah—been requested to converse with you by—ah—Doctor Pardee. A strict investigation of—ah—the circumstances that—ah—resulted in the injury, possibly serious injury—ah—of young Emmet is—ah—to be set on foot to-morrow, you—ah—know."

"I didn't know, although I guessed as much, sir," said Archie respectfully. "How badly is the Sp—, Emmet, hurt, sir?"

The professor pursed his lips and placed the tips of his fingers together with nice precision. "That—ah—I can hardly say. But—ah—we have had an—ah—intimation from Dr. Price that—ah—the child's condition is such that he —ah—Emmet, will have to be closely—ah—watched for the next—ah—twenty-four hours at least. I imagine that there may have been —ah—a slight concussion of the—ah—brain, which is—ah—manifesting itself at—ah—recurrent intervals. Or—ah—again, the dura mater may have been—ah—bruised by the impact of the missile that—ah—struck Emmet on the thinnest portion of the—ah—skull. I need not—ah—remind you, Hartley, that the—ah—dura mater is the outer membrane of the—ah—brain, that lines the—ah—cranial cavity."

"No, sir," said Archie, somewhat overwhelmed by the ponderous speech of the professor.

"And now—ah—will you—ah—be good enough to relate the incidents that—ah—happened prior to this—this—ah—unfortunate episode."

Archie hesitated. He had his full share of that wholesome schoolboy instinct that revolts against talebearing in any form and hence, he was silent for a brief period. But his common sense asserted itself. Snaggy had been guilty of a cowardly act which was outside the range of ordinary boyish larks or vagaries. Consequently he didn't deserve the protection that Archie or the others would have given him had it been merely a question of breaking bounds, or having midnight lunches in the dormitories or lighting midnight bonfires on the campus or securely roping the night watchman in his sentry box. And so he determined to speak without reservation, which he did.

Professor Ah listened attentively to the narrative.

"A most—ah—dastardly act on the part of this—ah—Pierce," he said when Archie had finished. "And you are—ah—quite sure that it was he or—ah—some of his associates who —ah—threw the—ah—projectile that harmed Emmet?"

"The projectile, sir?" asked Archie, a trifle puzzled. "Oh, yes, the snowball, sir. Well,

I cannot say that I actually saw the fellow who threw the thing at the—at Emmet, but Pierce and the others were facing us outside our end of the fort. And I'm positive that it was one of the stone-cores thrown by Pierce that hit me on the cheek. Besides that, sir—" Archie came to a full stop.

"Yes," said the professor encouragingly.

"I didn't want to say anything mean about anybody, sir," Archie spoke with an effort, "but I don't believe that there are any fellows in our school who would have done this except—except—"

"Pierce, *et al.*," interrupted the professor. "I understand you—ah—perfectly. By the way—ah—have you kept any of the stones around which the—ah—snow was molded?"

"Yes, sir, three of them including the one that knocked out the Spud."

"The—ah—whom?" Professor Ridgeley's tone was one of surprise.

Archie repressed a laugh with some difficulty.

"Emmet, I should have said, sir. We call him Spud because—because his last name's Murphy."

"I must confess that I—ah—fail to see the —ah—connection," said the professor gravely. "Please explain."

Which Archie did.

"This is—ah—very interesting, very." The professor reached for a notebook. "The—ah—incident is entirely pertinent to the—ah—work that I am compiling on—ah—the Derivation of Celto-Saxon Surnames." He wrote rapidly for a few moments. "During my researches into the subject, I—ah—have found that—ah—nomenclatures—"

There came a tap at the library door, much to Archie's relief. Professor Ah was a very good sort, but he forgot that small boys were hardly likely to be interested in the "Derivation, etc." But Archie forgot all about him and the work when, in response to the professor's "Come in," there entered Mildred.

"How do you do," said the little maid as she caught sight of the boy and coming forward, held out her hand to him, smiling prettily meanwhile.

"Quite well, thank you," said Archie, feeling as if spiders were running all over him and being terribly conscious of his once more reddening cheeks.

He also felt more savage than ever at Snaggy because it was that person who was responsible for the disfiguring sticking-plaster.

Mildred seemed to know what he was thinking about for her big blue eyes all at once di-

lated with sympathy and she looked anxiously at his face.

"Oh!" said she with a little gasp, "you've hurt yourself. Is it very bad? How did it happen?"

Archie looked appealingly at the professor. If a boy had asked the question he would have replied: "Swiped with a snowball." If a male grown-up had put the query, he would have answered without hesitation. He would even have known what to have said to Mrs. Ridgeley under the circumstances. But with Mildred—well, he was tongue-tied or anyway, he felt that if he attempted to explain he would get mixed up and seem like a stupid or a boaster. So, as has been said, he looked at Mildred's father. And the professor, knowing boy-nature because he loved boys, understood.

"Hartley was struck with—ah—a snowball that happened to be—ah—somewhat hard," he explained, a touch of humor curving the serious lines of his lips, "but—ah—it is believed that —ah—he will survive the—ah—wound."

Archie's eyes said, "Thank you, sir," and Mildred looked relieved.

"And I—ah—think that we will come along with you if—ah—your mother is—ah—prepared to receive us," added the professor.

"She's waiting for us in the parlor, Papa," said Mildred with a shake of those curls of hers. Archie like most boys, didn't take much notice of the way that girls wore their hair, but his exception to the rule was made in the case of Mildred. And what he thought about the curls in question he wouldn't have told anybody for anything. So it will not be proper for us to speak about it, either.

Like the well-bred boy that he was, Archie opened the door for the professor and the latter's little daughter on the score of the age of the former and the sex of the latter. And I'd like to say right here, that one of the distinguishing marks of a *real* gentleman is the respect that he shows to his elders and to females. For that matter, the distinction between a cad and a gentleman is, that the former doesn't consider the feelings or rights of anybody, while the latter respects the rights and feelings of everybody with whom he comes in contact.

Because of this, I've seen roughly dressed, uneducated and labor-soiled men who were gentlemen by instinct and showed as much in their behavior. And I've also met men who wore fashionable garments, sported expensive jewelry, and were college graduates who were cads of the worst sort. And in both instances,

it was their behavior towards others that proved them to be that which they actually were, as is always the case.

Mrs. Ridgeley was her usual sweet motherly self, and as she took Archie's hand in his, the boy felt a funny lump rising in his throat. Somehow or other, she reminded him so much of his own mother.

And Mrs. Ridgeley being possessed of much tact and, like her husband, having a knowledge of boy-nature, said nothing to the visitor about his damaged cheek. Instead, she asked after his home-people, his pets and his uncle; talked a bit about the coming indoor meet, laughed over the Snowfight and then told why she wanted to see him.

"A week from to-day," said she, "will be Mildred's birthday. We are going to have a party in honor of that event, and we intend to invite four boys from each of the first four classes. I want to give you your invitation now, and if there is any other boy in your class that you would like me to ask also, please tell me his name."

"We're going to have an awfully good time," interjected Mildred.

Archie would have liked to have said that he felt sure of *that,* but he hadn't the pluck to attempt the remark.

"Well, Archie?" prompted Mrs. Ridgeley after an amused glance at her daughter.

"Mackay is my chum, Mrs. Ridgeley, and I'm sure that he would be glad to come. And I'm very much obliged for the invitation that you've given me."

"Is there anybody else in the first that you'd like me to ask?"

Archie's face lit up with a generous smile. "Dozens of them, but I'd sooner not name anybody else if you don't mind."

"Why?"

"Well, most of them are such good fellows that I wouldn't like to crowd any of them out. But—" He halted suddenly.

"But, what?"

"I think—I would be very glad if the Sp—, Emmet, the boy who has been hurt—could come. He doesn't know many folks in this country and he's such a little chap to be away from his people. He's good fun, too. We got him singing Irish songs one night, and although he doesn't sing much, the songs were great."

"Emmet shall be one of the invited guests," said Mrs. Ridgeley as she made a note to that effect, "provided, of course, that he gets well enough to receive an invitation."

"Won't that be lovely?" cried Mildred, clapping her hands. "Real Irish songs by a real

Irish boy!" At which Archie felt a trifle sorry that he had said anything about the Spud.

The clock with the cathedral chimes on the mantel-piece now announced that it was a quarter to six and Archie half unconsciously took his watch from his fob-pocket as it did so, thereby revealing the charm that was Mildred's gift. Looking up, he saw that the eyes of both the mother and her daughter were fixed on the trinket. Mrs. Ridgeley's lips parted in that motherly smile that Archie liked so much.

"'Speed ye in all things excellent?'" said she, pointing to the inscription on the locket.

The boy noted the tone of kindly interrogation.

"I try to," he answered. And he honestly meant it.

CHAPTER XV

In spite of the fact that the gathering at Aunt Sally's had been as jolly as possible and that the Parrot's generosity had resulted in the guests eating more goodies—including coweyes—than they ought to have done according to dietetic laws, Archie felt so fit on the morning following, that he was up betimes writing a long letter to Uncle Horace, in which he told of the coming indoor meet; of his being selected as a contestant in the dashes and the low hurdles, and asked for any points that would be of service to him during training for, or while actually engaged in the events. This wasn't the exact language that he used, you know, but that was the drift of the epistle. He added: "My chum, Mackay, has been entered for the three-mile run. I shall be much obliged to you if you can tip him off to anything that will be useful to him. He hasn't been in a distance run before but I think that he will make out. He is a good football player, and this is his first try to be a runner. I talked him into trying out his legs I think, and so I want to see him come in with the

first three, anyhow. Will you please remember this when you write? Of course, Uncle, I know that you're no distance runner yourself as far as the track is concerned, but I've seen you go across country at home, and I know that you know all about how to make the distance.

"We begin training to-day. The winners in the indoor meet—most of them—will represent Donchester at the big Interscholastic Meet. So that you can understand that the fellows are pretty keen on making out good in the indoor. This is the reason that I am writing you, for my own and Mackay's sake.

"I don't think that there are any newcomers this term that will put it over me on the track. Please don't think that I'm too cocksure of myself when I say this. I don't forget what you once told me about always preparing for a sprint as if one had to run against somebody who was just a bit better that one was, oneself. But it's as I've said for all that. Evans though, is working hard and he's a pippin on the cinders, too. One or two of last term's boys are coming to the fore as well as he is. But I think that all of them don't run quite to form in the way that you have taught me to. I wouldn't mind showing them what it is that holds them back, but I'm afraid that they'd think that I was hydro about sprinting if I did so."

And with this and some more about the school and his studies and his chums, he remained, "Your Affectionate Nephew, Archie."

"Good small chap," said Uncle Horace to himself as he read the letter a day later. "What I like about Archie is, that he's such an unselfish little beggar. Always looking out for others. Wants his chum to win almost as badly as he wants to win himself. Is willing to coach the other fellows if they'd let him, although he'd be putting his own chances in jeopardy by so doing. No, he wouldn't though. Arch is a more wonderful runner than he just now suspects. I believe that he's unbeatable for his age. All the same, he deserves due credit for his generosity."

And the famous Yale athlete sat down and wrote a long communication to his nephew that will be given to the reader later on.

Having packed away his writing materials, stamped his letter and put it in his pocket ready for mailing, Archie threw a pillow at the still slumbering Mackay and left the dormitory to trot to the post-box adjoining the upper gates of the school grounds. As he finished his errand and was in the act of turning back to the dormitory, he saw a boy emerge from the farther door of the building and after taking a hasty look around the campus, make for the

entrance gates. Prompted by he knew not what, Archie dodged back into the shelter of a clump of low-growing hemlocks that flanked the mail-box and watched the other from between the concealing branches.

As he drew near, Archie saw that it was Blobs, and that he was on a queer errand was made manifest by the manner in which he occasionally stopped to look behind him or scanned the ground ahead. Finally, Blobs reached the wall that rose on either side of the gates, paused, searched the campus with his eyes, drew some objects from his pocket and threw them over the wall. Twice, thrice he did this and then slunk back to the dormitory, again casting suspicious glances around him, while on his way thither.

Archie watched him enter the building, waited a space and then made his way back to his room, where he found Mackay in the act of tying his neckwear and speculating on the absence of his chum. To him Archie related the Blobs incident. Mackay listened attentively.

"We'll look this up after breakfast, Arch," said he; "queer turnout, this. Blobby must have had good reasons for getting rid of the things that he chucked over the wall, or he wouldn't have taken the trouble to have quit the blankets so early. Well, we'll see."

The meal being over, Mackay wanted to begin an investigation right away. "Let's trot over to the Shambles first of all, and find out how the Spud is," suggested Archie. "There'll be plenty of time to go sleuthing afterwards. I've been dreaming about that kid all night. Couldn't help it."

"I've been dreaming, too, and about another kid, the Cherub. Dreamt that I was winning the three-mile run when he suddenly hopped out from somewhere and tripped and sat on me. And he weighed about a million of tons. Then I woke up."

" 'Bout time you did," laughed Archie. "That was a punishment on you for trying to clink me last night about the Ridgeleys. And I've got bully news for you all the same." So he went on to tell Mackay about the latter's coming invitation to Mildred's birthday party. Much to his surprise and somewhat to his indignation, Mackay didn't exhibit that enthusiasm that Archie thought the occasion called for, and he said as much.

"Oh, it's all right and I suppose that Mildred and her chosen friends"—Mackay shot a quizzical glance at the other—"will enjoy themselves. But I haven't much use for girls' parties. Too much sit-up-straighty and mustn't-raise-voicey, and may-I-pass-your-

platey? for yours truly. Too nicey altogether, Arch."

"All right, I suppose that Mildred won't go into a corner and die if you do stay away. And there'll be more—lots more—of Mrs. Ridgeley's jams and preserves and cake for the rest of us, if *you* are not there."

"By the great angel cake, I clean forgot that part of the proposition!" cried Mackay; "sure I'll come! I never said I wouldn't. Don't you hop at conclusions so easily, my impulsive young friend."

"I thought that the feed end of the affair would fetch you. If Donchester gave pies for prizes instead of books and diplomas, you'd be honor man every time, Mac. But here we are at the Shambles."

The office attendant at the hospital told the lads that Emmet was somewhat better, that he had passed a good night, and that Dr. Price had left word for callers that, all being well, the injured boy would be about again in a week or so.

Archie's face beamed happily as he heard the news and Mackay's was scarcely less radiant.

"I wonder if the Spud will be well enough to talk this afternoon," said Mackay as they made their way to the gates. "Doctor Pardee will be anxious to know if he got on to the cad who

threw the stony-hearted snowball." Archie didn't reply. He was busy thinking of the evidence that he had against the Snaggyites, and wondering if it would carry weight with the Head.

"Here we are," said Mackay as the gates were reached. "And now, whereabouts did Blobs get rid of the evidences of his ghastly crime?"

The gates opened out into a walk flanked with trees and bushes that led down to the main roadway of the town of Donchester. At the lower end of the walk was another pair of gates and a porter's lodge at which the youngsters who had received out-of-bounds permits had to show the same to Mousey, which was the nickname of the porter. Mousey was a small chap with tiny, sparkling eyes and a squeaky voice and a way of popping in and out of his lodge that reminded one of a mouse playing about its hole. "Mousey," like the majority of schoolboy epithets, was very appropriate to the little man. After breakfast, the upper gates were opened, allowing the boys access to the walk, but Mousey kept unceasing guard on the lower gates to see that none entered or went out unless they had the necessary credentials.

Outside the walls were stretches of what in the summer were lawns, dotted with clumps

of flowering bushes and evergreens. This particular morning they were dazzlingly white expanses, the bare twigs of the deciduous and the needle-like leaves of the other plants, being each thickly tufted with snow. Archie led the way to where the things thrown away by Blobs must have fallen. There was no difficulty in locating them, seeing that they and they alone had disturbed the level surface. And they turned out to be a dozen or so of stones, of the same size and description as those Archie had found in the Snaggy snowballs!

"Well, what do you know about that!" cried Mackay when he had gotten over the shock of the discovery. "If this doesn't beat new-laid eggs! You were certainly the god in the machine—or in the tree—this morning, Archie! You'd be a treasure to the biological class, so you would!"

"Why?" asked Archie innocently.

"Because of your knack of finding 'missing links'! Get that?"

"Oh, pshaw! Stop your clinking, Mac. What had we better do about this?"

"Do? That's easy enough. Gather up the pebbles and produce 'em at the investigation at the dramatic moment. Tack on to 'em a description of the furtive, sly, slinking, sinister, and as many more adjectives as you like man-

ner, in which Blobs approached the wall and—away he goes for a six months' vacation!"

"A cut-out?"

"Yes, and darned well deserved, the cur."

"But suppose that he didn't gather the stones in the first place—"

"Archie," said Mackay in a tone of utter disgust, "you're a good sort, but sometimes, you make me feel as if I'd been doing without sleep for a couple of nights. You make me weary; incline me to repose. Suppose that he didn't hump himself to get the stones together, you'll admit that he did the hump act to get rid of 'em. Honest, do you think it your duty to try to protect such a fellow or fellows?"

Archie looked a bit hurt. Mackay had never spoken so sharply to him before.

"I'm not trying to protect them," he declared, "but I don't—oh, I hate to see fellows get into the sort of mess that these are in!"

"I've no doubt but that they hate the mess themselves," replied Mackay, coolly. "And speaking of hating, I hate the mean trick that has put poor little Spud in hospital bed. What?"

"I guess you're right," admitted Archie after a pause. "I once heard Dad say that too much mercy was an out and out crime because it encouraged crime. And I don't forget Spud even

if I do hope that Dr. Pardee will give 'em another chance to turn white. It's a nuisance, anyhow, that a handful of rotters like Snaggy and his crowd can make things kind of unpleasant for the rest of us at times."

"Yes," admitted Mackay, "but perhaps they're like a dog's fleas—they keep our minds off our other troubles."

"I hope that that's original, but it sounds too good to be so," said Archie with a grin.

"Never you mind whether I cribbed it or turned it out hissing hot from my own brainpan," retorted Mackay, "it fits the case anyhow."

"Maybe. But it's time we got back to the grind. Come on!" He then broke into his usual easy lope in the direction of the recitation hall, followed by Mackay who tried to overtake him, but vainly.

CHAPTER XVI

At lunch that day, the boys who had been selected to compete in the indoor interclass athletic meet, were instructed to take their seats at the training table and very proud youngsters they were in consequence. Also, were they much envied by their less fortunate schoolmates. Athletic ability is, as Mr. Hartley wrote his son, not everything in life, but it's pleasant, nevertheless, to know that you have well-developed muscles and sound organs and that the possession of these place you, in a bodily sense, a trifle above your weaker fellows. It's human nature in general, and boy nature in particular, to attempt to excel, and it's a mighty good thing that this is so. If there were no ambitions, there would be no progress, which would be bad for the individual and the world alike. Therefore, the realization that you're a notch or two better than the other fellow isn't a bit wrong, boys. What *is* wrong, however, is an attempt to persuade yourself and others, that you are better than you really are. The one who does this, is a boaster, an egotist, or,

as they say at Donchester, a "hydroist." Such a person is sure to be found out sooner or later, and given the contempt that he so properly deserves.

One of the many advantages of athletics is that a boy can't bluff when he goes in for them. He may crib his themes, "marrow" his recitations, and "hone" in other ways. And when he leaves school and gets out in life, he may—for a time—continue to appear to be that which he really isn't. But on the track or field, it's different. There, you are shown up exactly as you are, in a physical sense. And the honesty that athletics thus breeds in their followers is of a manifest sort. One of the most attractive qualities of a real athlete, is his wholesome sincerity; his entire freedom from humbug or "bladder-bounce," to use a school term once more.

Archie, as he made his way to the training table in company with the other young athletes, was comfortably conscious of the fact that Mildred was watching him from her seat on the faculty dais. Once and once only did he venture to glance in her direction, for he knew that much clinking on the part of his companions would be sure to follow his looking at her as much as he felt that he wanted to. But that one look that he gave her was highly satisfac-

tory to him. She shot back a bright little smile in response to it, and he saw that her cheek was flushed and her eyes brighter than ever. And somehow he determined then and there that nobody should beat him at the sprints or the hurdles at the coming meet, and that he would make his study equal his athletic record. Or, to put it another way, that Mildred should be proud of him—not that he said as much to himself in those words, you know, but that was what his thoughts amounted to.

Travers, sitting with his charges, saw to it that they ate only the things that were good for them under training conditions, and that they didn't bolt their food. Let me tell you that the thorough mastication is a very important part of training for an athletic event. Unless the body is properly nourished, you cannot get in "condition" and you cannot obtain this nourishment if you do not let the teeth and the mouth do that share in the process of digestion that nature intended that they should. I don't want to slip in a dietetic lecture just here, but I do want to impress on you that an important part of digestion takes place in the mouth and that's the reason why it has been so arranged by our Maker that we *like to taste things.* While this tasting and chewing is going on, the liquids of the mouth are mingling with the food, causing

certain chemical changes to take place in it which are really the first steps in its digestion. But if you don't chew your food enough, these changes do not take place in the mouth but the stomach has to do them instead. Naturally, the stomach rebels at having to do double duty and such rebelling takes the form of heaviness, sick headache, loss of vitality—all of which are fatal to a chap's athletic prospects. In a way, the stomach is the mainspring of the body. Take care, then, that you do nothing that takes the "like" out of the spring or interferes with its working.

Just before the lunch was over, a monitor came to Archie and told him that Dr. Pardee wanted him in the school study when the meal was over. A similar message was sent to the Cherub. Then Archie watched the monitor go to Snaggy, O'Brien, Blobs, and the rest of the bully's associates, and he noted that they seemed to lose their appetites on being given the Doctor's order.

Mackay sitting opposite to him, caught his eye and chuckled.

"The fist of the Head is closing on 'em," he laughed. "I'd hate to have the squeeze coming to me that's coming to them."

Archie said nothing in reply. He knew that the fellows deserved severe punishment, but

he was sorry that he was to be a party to bringing it on them. And so he waited in uncomfortable silence for the lunch to come to an end.

Well, the meal finally ended and Archie and the others lingered behind until the crowd had passed out, when they made their way to Dr. Pardee's sanctum, that could be reached through a passageway from the hall. Thus it happened that our hero, the Cherub, and the Snaggy crowd found themselves bunched together for the same reason, but with feelings that materially differed in regard to the coming meeting with the Head.

Archie and the big minny reached the passageway first, with the others close behind.

"Seem anxious to get busy snitching, don't they?" said Snaggy to his followers in a stage whisper.

"Archibald Jefferson Hartley looks as if he was dying to take a sprint on the sneak-track," added Skiddy.

"Pretty pair of telltales, aren't they?" remarked Blobs; "the long and the short of it, and both gabble-geese."

For once Archie lost his temper. To be accused of talebearing—the great crime of the schoolboy code, as you all know—was bad enough, but to be accused by the group that represented the seamy side of Donchester was a bit

too much. He tried hard to control himself but failed. So with flashing eyes he turned on the Snaggyites:

"You're a nice lot to talk about people," he said angrily. "Talebearers are we? Well, before we get through telling Dr. Pardee what we know about you, you'll be busy thinking up some way of squaring yourselves with Donchester and your folks at home. As for you, Snaggy, everybody knows what a cowardly cur you are! You, Skiddy, are as crooked in your ways as you are in your walk, and about you, Mr. Blobs, the next time you try to get rid of rocks, be sure there's nobody looking on."

And so saying, Archie fished out a couple of the incriminating pebbles from his trousers pocket, and held them up to view!

"And if we were on the campus, ugly-mouth," squeaked the Cherub as he turned to Snaggy, "I'd fall on you again."

So saying, he followed Archie, who on delivering his speech, had made for the Doctor's study.

Blobs looked at his companions in consternation, while they seemed to be affected in the like manner.

"Hartley has got us dead to rights," he said, after a pause. "What's to be done, you fellows?"

"Stick it out that Hartley's lying." Snaggy

it was who spoke. "Swear that you were never out of the dormitory until breakfast bell. We'll stand by you and back you up."

A monitor came out of the private door.

"What are you fellows hanging around for?" he asked. "Don't you know that Dr. Pardee is waiting for you? Get your legs going."

The boys obeyed. "Remember," whispered Snaggy to Blobs, who, pale and nervous, nodded in reply.

"What put it in your head to start this new trouble with Hartley?" said Skiddy under his breath as he looked savagely at Snaggy. "If you'd kept your tongue between those stumps of yours, you wouldn't have red-ragged him. Now he's mad enough to roast us to the Doctor the best he knows how."

"You ragged him, too," said Snaggy sullenly.

"Yes, but you began it," repeated the other.

"Oh, shut up and save your breath for the Head!"

"You take care that I don't use it to give you away," snarled Skiddy, as he eyed Snaggy aggressively.

Snaggy opened his mouth to reply, but as he had now reached the study he thought better of it and remained silent.

Dr. Pardee, looking very grave, even stern, was seated at a table. To his right were Archie,

the Cherub, the Spud, the school physician, and one of the women servants, named Mary Robbins. And the little Irish boy, wearing a long strip of plaster on his head, looked pale and shaky.

The monitor motioned the Snaggyites to seats on the left of the Head, which somehow or other, brought to Archie's memory the Biblical passage about the "goats" being placed in that position when their separation from the "sheep" takes place on the Day of Judgment. Then the Doctor plunged into the matter without any further preliminaries.

"Hartley," said he, "tell us what happened on the day of the Snowfight—the events that led up to the wounding of Murphy."

Archie rose and not without some boyish embarrassment, related the events with which the reader is already familiar.

"And you are quite sure that the snowballs that contained stones—those that hit you and Murphy—were thrown by these boys?" asked Dr. Pardee as he indicated the accused.

Archie hesitated. "There were snowballs coming from all sides, sir," he said at length, "so that I wouldn't like to say positively that Snag—Pierce, I mean—or those who were with him, threw the one that hurt Murphy. But I am sure that the ball that cut my cheek, was

thrown by Pierce. I saw him aim at me and tried to dodge, but wasn't quick enough. Then I felt the blow and later, discovered that I was bleeding."

"You picked up the remnants of a snowball that contained a stone, did you not?"

"Yes, sir, two such balls." Here he saw Blobs exchange glances with Snaggy and the others.

"Have you the stones with you?"

"Yes, sir." He produced them, and the Doctor, after examining them closely, laid them on the table by his side.

"Now let us hear from Murphy," said the Doctor, smiling encouragingly at the little lad. "Did you see whence the snowball came that hurt you, my boy?"

"Yis, sor," replied the Spud without hesitation.

"Oh, you did, did you?" The Doctor turned to the youngster and regarded him attentively. "And who threw it?"

"The boy with the quare walk on him, sor," responded the Spud, pointing an accusing forefinger at O'Brien. "He and the other two and some more of them, was doing nothing but throwing at me and Hartley and Chipp, sor."

"Really. And why did they pick out you and your friends as targets, may I ask?"

The Spud remained silent. He had that horror of tale-telling that is in the heart of every wholesome-minded schoolboy, even where there exists justification for speaking freely.

"Well?" prompted the Doctor, after a few moments of waiting.

The Spud shot an appealing glance at Archie. And Archie understood.

"If you don't mind, sir," said he, "I'd like to answer that question instead of Murphy."

"All right, Hartley."

"Well, sir"—he spoke with reluctance and with an evident desire to let Snaggy and his crowd off as easily as possible—"we, that is, Murphy and myself and the Ch—Chipp and some more of us, haven't quite agreed with them about some things, and I suppose that they"—he indicated the "goats" on the left—"thought that the Snowfight was a good chance to get even with us."

"Which," admitted the Doctor with a half smile at the boy's frankness, "was quite permissible if the getting even had been done by fair means. But apparently such means were not used." He turned to the Snaggyites. "You have heard what has been charged against you. What have you to say in answer? Let us hear from you first, Pierce."

Snaggy arose, uncomfortable and sullen.

"Hartley is ly—is mistaken when he says that I threw the snowball that hurt him, sir," he began. "And I don't see how he can speak so positively about it, when as he admits, the balls were coming from all directions."

"What about the stones in the balls that you and your associates are charged with throwing?" asked the Doctor, with a frown beginning to form on his usually placid forehead.

Snaggy paused and stole a glance at his companions as if he were consulting their faces as to what reply he ought to make. What he saw there decided him.

"We didn't use stones, sir," he said boldly. "If the stones that Hartley *says* he found in the snowballs were really there, they didn't come from us."

"Oh, you miserable—" began the Spud fiercely, but a look from Archie checked him.

Doctor Pardee turned such a searching glance on Snaggy, that the eyes of the latter wavered, while a flush stole to his cheeks.

"Do you mean to intimate that Hartley and Murphy are not speaking the truth?" the Head asked, his frown deepening.

"If you'll excuse me, sir," falsettoed the Cherub, all of a sudden, "I'd like to say that I saw Hartley pick up a snowball with a stone core."

"Thank you," replied the Doctor; "you may continue, Pierce."

"I was—was only saying that he was mistaken, sir," faltered Snaggy.

"What do O'Brien and your other companions have to say in regard to the matter?" asked the Head. "Speak up, boys."

Thus adjured, Skiddy and Blobs, following Snaggy's lead, denied all knowledge of the rock-filled snowballs.

"In other words, you flatly contradict Hartley and Murphy," commented the Head. "What have you to say in reply?" he turned to our hero and the Spud.

Archie slowly arose to his feet. Hating falsehoods as he did, the attempt on the part of the trio to make him out a liar, exasperated him beyond endurance. He determined, therefore, to hold back nothing from the Doctor that should prove him guiltless of mendacity or that should fix the guilt of Snaggy and his friends.

"If they know nothing about the stones, Dr. Pardee," he said quietly, "I would like to ask Blobs why he tried to get rid of these this morning." So saying, he thrust his hand in his hip pocket and produced therefrom, a half-dozen of the stones that he and Mackay had picked up on the snow-covered lawn.

Dr. Pardee picked up the stones, and having

compared them with those that Archie had found in the snowballs, turned to our hero.

"Tell us under what circumstances these stones came into your possession," he said.

Archie related the facts with which the reader is already familiar, omitting to mention Mackay's name, however. He had a feeling that he had no right to drag his chum into the matter.

"I should say that it was about half an hour before the preparatory bell for breakfast, sir," replied Archie.

"What have you to say about this, Blobs?" asked the Doctor sternly, and even as he spoke, his eyes wandered to the hands of the boy. Now, they say, do certain authorities, that anybody who is telling a lie, cannot keep his fingers still while so doing. I will not vouch for this in every instance, but I do know that it is correct in many cases, as I have proven. Be it as it may, Blobs's fingers, ere he answered, began to twitch and intertwine as if they were a bunch of snakes suffering from St. Vitus' dance. At this the Doctor drew his own conclusions.

"Hartley must have—must have mistaken me for another boy," said Blobs haltingly. "I—I never left the—the dormitory until we—I—heard the breakfast bell." His fingers were wiggling desperately.

"Will the others substantiate your state-

ment?" asked the Doctor slowly. Snaggy rose, and as he did so, something like a sigh escaped the lips of the Head. A man who is fond of, and in sympathy with boys, is always hurt when he sees the latter doing wrong, especially when the wrong takes the form of something that violates the first principles of the boyish code of honor. And I needn't tell you that a strict regard for the truth occupies or should occupy, one of the most prominent places in such code. A boy may get into all kinds of scrapes, all sorts of difficulties due to his spirits or the "cussedness" of his youthful mentality, but as long as he retains a close regard for the truth, there is nothing really wrong with him. He may be or ought to be readily forgiven if he " 'fesses up," when taxed with letting off his excess vitality in ways that tutors and parents don't quite approve. But the moment that he begins to falsify and equivocate in order to save himself from the consequences of his scrapes and didoes, he is on the downward path. And in all the world of wrong-doing, there is nothing so despicable and dangerous to himself and others as a liar. Lying is a habit that is so easily acquired and maintained, that the only way to avoid it is by being careful not to indulge in the first lie.

"I can back up what Blobs has said about being in the dormitory until breakfast bell," de-

clared Snaggy unblushingly; "so can O'Brien." The latter nodded as the Doctor turned his gaze upon him.

"Well, Hartley, you have heard what has been said. Have you anything to say in reply?" queried the Head.

Archie looked the Doctor straight in the eye. "It was Blobs that I saw, sir, say what he may. I was within three yards of him, although he didn't see me, because I was behind the bush. When I came back to my dormitory, I told Mackay and if he were here, he would tell you that I did so."

Dr. Pardee touched a bell. The monitor responded. "Find Mackay on the campus and tell him to come here," said the Head.

In less than five minutes, Mackay appeared, wondering why he was wanted at the inquisition.

"Mackay," said the Doctor, "I want you to tell us what Hartley said to you on his return to the dormitory from posting a letter this morning?"

"Yes, sir," replied Mackay, and then he went on to relate the Blobs incident.

"And you assisted him to gather up some of the stones that, as you both charge, you saw Blobs throwing away?"

"Yes, sir."

"Mary Robbins," said the Doctor.

Mary, looking rather frightened and confused, turned, dropped a curtsey, and replied, "Yes, sir."

"Do you see in this room the boy whom you saw at six o'clock this morning climbing the fence at the back of the faculty quarters?"

"I do, Doctor," quavered Mary.

"Which is he?"

The servant pointed to Blobs, who thereupon looked at her as if he could swallow her without salt, and shook his head angrily.

"Thank you, that will do. You may leave the room." Which Mary did, apparently glad to escape.

"Doctor," went on the Head, turning to the physician, "will you be good enough to state the nature of the wound inflicted on Murphy and its actual or positive consequences, as well as possibilities for the future?"

The physician bowed. "It is an incised lacerated wound, about two inches in length, such as might be inflicted by a jagged piece of stone. The missile was thrown with such force, that Murphy narrowly escaped having a fractured skull, which injury might readily have had a fatal termination. As it was, there was a slight concussion of the brain. The patient is doing well, thanks to his youth, and unless unlooked-

for complications set in, his final recovery may be expected in a few weeks."

Dr. Pardee turned to Snaggy and his followers, and the look on his face was such that the latter felt shivery.

"You have heard what the doctor has stated. Murphy has had a narrow escape from being killed. As it is, I should be warranted in handing you over to the police on a charge of assault in the second degree; indeed, I am not at all sure that I shall not allow the law to punish you instead of taking the punishment into my own hands." The Doctor's voice trembled with anger. "But this is not all. You have not only been guilty of a cowardly and brutal assault on this little lad and Hartley—the motives for which are well known to me—but you have sought to cover your crime—for such it is—by outrageous falsehoods, a conspiracy of falsehoods. By this you will understand that I attach no value to your statements, but, on the contrary, believe Hartley and Murphy. This act of yours is the culmination of many acts that unfit you for the companionship of decent and honorable boys. You have not only disgraced yourselves, but Donchester also, and if you are allowed to remain here, it would seem that you will continue to do in the future as you have done in the past. This to all of you.

To you in particular," he turned to Snaggy. "I wish to say that your conduct is especially despicable. You tried to harm the boy who saved your life. I need not dilate on the dastardly nature of your act, therefore; it is incredible that any boy who has had the privilege of associating with the students of Donchester could be guilty of such incredible ingratitude."

The Doctor's voice broke. The repute of the school and its students was very dear to him and the stain put upon it by the act of Snaggy and his companions pained him deeply.

"As to the punishment that I shall award you—all three of you—I am not prepared to name it at the moment. But it will be sufficient, rest assured of that, and it will include your parents being made acquainted with the wrong-doing that has called for it." Blobs here began to weep dolefully. "In the meantime, you will remain in your dormitory; for you are not fit to associate with your classmates. Monitor, take these boys to their room and notify other monitors and the faculty of the suspension of all their privileges. High punishment diet and close confinement for them, please."

The monitor beckoned to the crestfallen, dismal-looking trio, who, without a word of protest, marched out of the room. The diet al-

luded to by the Doctor, included the cutting off of all small luxuries dear to the schoolboy stomach, including sugar, butter, fruit, and pastry. It was rightly believed by both the boys and the faculty to form one or a part of the severest punishments that could be meted out to the former. The average youngster would sooner take a sound beating than an enforced fast, wouldn't he?

And now Dr. Pardee turned to Archie and the others, and his face was very sad. "I do not need to question you further," he said with a tremor in his voice, "for I have been made acquainted by others of the conduct of these unhappy lads in regard to you and your associates. Conduct that is as uncalled for as it is heinously ungrateful." He looked straight at Archie. "And I want to thank those present and absent, for the patience and forbearance that they have exercised towards those unhappy lads who have just left us." He rose and the others did likewise. "Finally, my dear boys, let your efforts to become true men through the medium of a true boyhood, be like your efforts to attain athletic proficiency—constant, untiring, and with all your powers directed to the given end. Good morning."

So the boys filed out, that is, all but Spud, who regretfully, went back to the Shambles.

And as Archie linked his arm in that of Mackay, he tried to remember when and where it was that he heard the Doctor's words before or something like them. And suddenly there came to him the motto on the charm that he wore: "Speed ye in all things excellent."

"Yes, that's it," he said to himself.

"What's 'it'?" asked Mackay.

"Nothing," replied Archie.

"I guess you're about right," retorted his chum. "*'It'* must be in the neuter gender."

CHAPTER XVII

The news about the impending punishment of the Snaggyites spread, to the general satisfaction of the school and the special satisfaction of the younger minnies. As has been said, bullying was not allowed at Donchester, yet for all that, Snaggy and his crowd managed to evade the rule in a manner that, while it did not bring trouble to themselves, was, nevertheless, the cause of no little dread and discomfort to the smaller boys. I will not go into details as to the nasty, mean tricks that they played on the minnies, but simply say that they had relied on the anti-tale-telling instinct of the little chaps to prevent their contemptible actions from reaching the ears of the monitors and the faculty. And because of this instinct, they had, so far, escaped the punishment that they so richly deserved.

Archie and his friends had gotten together on the campus and were discussing the situation.

"I'm sure glad that the coyote band is trapped," said Curtis, "which same is the end of most coyotes:—four or two-legged. The

mangy critters seem to forget that the things they do and the way they act, necessarily calls for dead-falls, noose-hauls and choke-ups, and one or the other is bound to get them some day."

"Quite true, oh, philosopher from the sunsetty and grasshoppery land of sage-brush and jack-rabbits," observed Parrot soberly, "and may I ask to which brand of snare the present predicament of Snaggy *et al.* may be compared? Speak not the reply in parables, I pray thee!"

"You can take your choice, you cackling blue-jay," replied Curtis with a grin, "but if I was trying to trap you, I'd certain try the choke-up. Even if I did catch you that way, you'd talk with your hands, the same way that dumb folks do."

"Quite right," observed Parrot placidly; "truth can even come out of Kansas together with other rare and curious things." He eyed Curtis with the eye of the connoisseur.

"I wonder what the Doctor will really do with these fellows!" observed Evans, when the laughter had subsided. "I do hope that he'll 'stiffle' them. It's what they deserve and the school would be all the better off for their going." "Stiffle" was Donchesterian for dismissal for a long period or permanently.

"I'm with you in that," said Mackay heartily. "You ought to have heard the cold-

blooded lies that they handed out to the Head. Parties who can forge chilled fibs as easily as they can aren't wanted in this locality."

"Practice makes perfect," replied Evans bitterly. "Look at the yarns Snaggy used to tell me about you fellows and—and how he tried to persuade me that doing dirty tricks on the track was perfectly proper. I was fool enough to believe his lies and see what trouble I got into."

"Oh, well, you tumbled to him in time," spoke up Archie. "Let's hope that Snaggy will tumble to himself, some day."

"Archibald Hartley, you make me sick!" said Mackay with slow deliberation, "always wagging the olive branch when a good stout club is the thing that's needed. Talk about taking a tumble, how about the tumble that poor Spud took when the Snaggy crew soaked him? Forgotten that, I suppose. You're so doped with the mercy stuff that you're losing your memory!"

"Mercy me!" ejaculated Parrot. "Hark to Pa rebuking Sonny!"

Archie flushed painfully. He thought a great deal of Mackay and his opinions, and so far there had been no trace of friction between the two. This was the first time that Mackay had spoken to him sharply and he felt it very much indeed. Yet he knew that he was right in hop-

ing that Snaggy would reform and, like the plucky chap that he was, he refused to stifle his convictions or silence his voice in regard to them, even for his chum.

"You're 'way off, Mac," he said. "I believe that Snaggy deserves all that's coming to him, and more. And I haven't forgotten the Spud. All the same, I hope that Snaggy will turn decent some day, and I know that you do, too. You, nor any of the rest of you, would want him to keep on being the same mean beast that he is, would you?"

"Archie's dug down to well-water," declared Curtis. "It's sure certain that we'd sooner see Snaggy good steer than poor beef. He needs to have the virtues kicked into him, perhaps, but once there, I opines that we'd like to observe 'em take root."

"Rah! rah! rah! Three cheers for the horny-handed farmer from Kansas. Whoop! Wah!" cried Parrot in close imitation of the bird from which he took his nickname.

Mackay looked at Archie. "You're right, Kid, and I'm sorry that I spoke the way I did to you. Allee samee, I don't see how you're going to bore down to the good in Snaggy's nature—if there's any there—through the thick layer of cussedness that shuts it in."

"Out in Kansas, Dad had the boring of a

driven well going on for over two years," began Curtis. "And then—"

"And then, Dad's son came east to bore people with his parables," broke in the irrepressible Parrot. A howl of laughter followed.

"And then, just as he was about to give it up as a bad job, he struck water," went on the unmoved Curtis.

"The moral being that if you are thirsty, all you have to do is to bore a hole in the per-a-ri-e for two years and you'll sure get a drink if you don't die of drought in the meantime. Whooah! Polly want a drink? Whoo!"

"The moral being, that if you dig long enough, you'll find good in Snaggy and sense in Parrot," said Curtis with a faint smile.

Archie smiled and nodded at the boy from Kansas. "I'm with you on that, Curt," he said, "on both propositions." At this, Parrot groaned dismally.

"Well, what does all this lead to?" asked Evans.

Mackay shrugged his shoulders as much as to say that he'd he hanged if he knew.

"Oh, well, let's wait and see," said Archie. And just then, the bell for recitations rang, and the group proceeded to race for the hall, our hero easily keeping ahead of the others, in spite of their frantic efforts to overtake him.

CHAPTER XVIII

On the morning following came the much-anticipated letter from Uncle Horace. It was a long one, and Archie, who had risen early and was dressed before Mackay had come out of his "dawn dreams," as the Irish people prettily call the half-awake visions of the early morning, while perched cross-legged and comfortable on his bed, read the missive with the delight that he read anything that his uncle wrote to him. For the famous Yale runner was as clever with his pen as he was with his legs, which is saying a good deal. And I'd like to say right here that the knack of writing a readable letter is "devoutly to be wished," as Hamlet says in his famous soliloquy.

After telling about some letters that he had received from Archie's people and what they contained in the way of news, and congratulating our hero on his prospects in the coming indoor inter-class meet at Donchester, Uncle Horace went on to say:

"You ask me for points regarding sprinting indoors, and in what respects such points may

differ from those that have to do with sprinting outdoors. My answer is, that in the essentials, there is no difference between those that apply to indoors or outdoors. By the essentials I mean faithful training; stride; breathing and so forth. But the start of the indoor dash is a most important matter. In the 100-yard or the 120-yard dash, a poor start may mean feet to the bad at the finish. In the case of the 40-yard or 45-yard indoor dash, however, it may mean yards. Unless, in the latter instance, you get away right on the crack of the pistol, you may as well drop out. A start that takes place a tick behind the gun, usually means a lost race. Remember this, Archie, and practise starting until you feel that you couldn't shove a sheet of note-paper between the 'pop' and your being in the stride.

"I needn't tell you that at all times a sprint is a continuous and sustained burst of speed; this remark applying to the 40-yards on and right up to the 300-yards. But the runner in the short dashes must make up his mind from the first that he is going to use up his speed-power to the very last grain *right there and then!* He must concentrate and concentrate and concentrate every atom of his energy on the dash! When the time comes to 'get set' let him realize that he is about to do this, and

make up his mind that he *will* do it. Many sprints, Archie, are won by this mental process. The hypnotists call it 'self-suggestion' and so, in a way, it is. Once you have gotten yourself in this frame of mind, the dash is half won. Later, when you get out in life, you'll find that this power of determination; of concentration, that you have acquired on the cinder track, will be mighty useful to you in lots of ways.

"Speaking of cinder tracks reminds me that the indoor dashes will, of course, be run on boards and on a straightaway. You will wear shoes with short spikes. I suppose that Travers will use the indoor track for starting practice from the first in order that you may get accustomed to the feel of the boards, which is most necessary, by the way. Boards are all very well in their way, but they don't yield the 'spring' that cinders do, and hence it is that indoor sprinting records do not compare very favorably with those made in the open. To sum up the whole subject, Archie, speedy starting and the speediest going are the two secrets of winning the 40-yard or 45-yard sprints.

"In regard to the low hurdles, I suppose that as usual indoors, the distance will be 45 yards with four hurdles two and one-half feet high placed at ten-yard intervals with a ten-yard

run to the first hurdle. Speaking in general terms, it is the speed that you make *between* hurdles that wins the race. You must sprint *at* the first hurdle, take it in the way that I shall later describe, and the moment that your foot touches earth again, go on with the sprint, repeating to the end of the distance. This, I believe is the first time that you have tackled the hurdles in a serious manner. In consequence of this, it is not at all unlikely that you will find yourself hesitating when you reach the first hurdle, or even if you take that one all right, the tendency to funk or balk may come upon you when you approach other hurdles. But don't mind that; almost every new hand at the game has had the same experience, including your uncle. Travers in all likelihood, will practise you and your competitors at a single hurdle for a little time so that you may learn to get over this 'hurdle-age.' Let me repeat that you *must* learn to dash at the first and following hurdles in order to make a good showing.

"As to the way that you take the hurdles. If Travers is up to athletic date, as I have no doubt he is, he will teach you the method that was first used by Alvin Kraenzlein, one of the best hurdlers that ever listened to the starter's pistol. The old way was so to jump that

one leg was drawn up under the body while the other was kept extended so to speak, in readiness to take up the stride when its foot touched the ground. Also, if the spring from the ground was made with the right foot, the body was turned slightly to the right while it was going over the hurdle, and if from the left foot, to the left. This naturally called for the straightening of the body when the stride was taken up again, which meant time, and as it is time that counts in hurdling, the method was open to criticism.

"Kraenzlein's plan did away with the twist. He ran right at the hurdle as if it wasn't there and when he got to it, simply lifted one leg, gave a spring with the other and *stepped* over the obstacle, reaching the track on the other side without losing his speed or rhythm of his stride in the slightest! Do you catch on? Let me repeat. He *didn't jump* the hurdle in the ordinary meaning of the word; he *stepped* over it. A very little practice will convince you of the ease of the Kraenzlein plan, and the advantage that it insures over those that use the old way. If with its help you save a quarter of a second at each hurdle, you ought to be two and a half seconds to the good over your old-fashioned competitors, at the end of the race.

"As I have said, Travers must know his busi-

ness or he wouldn't turn out the schoolboy crack athletes that he does, so that I shall not attempt to advise you in regard to the actual training for the hurdles. But I may say that in my own case, I practised at the single hurdle every other day for a couple of weeks; by which time I had gotten rid of all my hesitancy at the take-off. Then I started in at three hurdles so as to get my speed on the flat stretches between them, taking care not to do this more than four times a week. You can easily overdo hurdling-practice with the result that you become sore and stale. Once a week I took the entire flight as hard as I could go; but never oftener. After my first race, in which I came in third, by the way, I abstained from the hurdles for two days before a race, so as to let my muscles rest up. The fact that I failed and against good advice, to observe this precaution but practised right up to the day of the race, accounted for my defeat. But the lesson wasn't wasted on me as my trophy-case shows.

"I would advise you not to take *too* long walks. Such walks form a splendid exercise for distance men and they strengthen the heart, harden the leg muscles and improve the wind. But they tend to stiffen and bind the muscles, which is about the last thing that the sprinter or hurdler desires. Yet I wouldn't have you

give up walking altogether. If Travers approves, you might take a two-mile ramble on those days that you are not practising at the hurdles. But do not be tempted to overdo your walk.

"A capital exercise for the hurdler is that of lifting each leg alternately, with the knee reaching to the level of the arm-pit. When the knee has been brought up to its full height, thrust the toe forward as far as it will go, and bring the entire leg smartly to the ground. This motion will, in a way, reproduce that that you will use when taking or 'stepping' the hurdle. Learn to make the motion without any pause between its several phases.

"When practising, clear the hurdle with the legs as close to it as possible. By so doing, you not only save yourself the waste of strength that is brought about by jumping too high, but in addition, you save time. Overjumping means that you are in the air longer than you need be, and that you have wasted a fraction of a second in consequence. These fractions multiplied by ten, may mean the loss of a race.

"My, Archie, but I'm spinning this out! If I once get started on the talk-track, it seems difficult to come to a stop! But there is such a lot to athletics, isn't there? Much more than

people who know nothing about them, are aware.

"Now about your chum who is entered for the three-mile run. It is true that I know the general principles of the training for such an event, but I've had a long chat with Harry Wolstach who is the champion distance man here at Yale, and that which follows embodies his remarks on the subject, very much boiled down. He says that endurance with fair reserve speed are the essentials for distance-running. The first can be secured by long walks varied by runs that begin with a quarter mile, and gradually increasing up to two miles. These practice runs may be jogged easily, the idea being to develop the wind and endurance of the runner rather than his speed. After two miles can be run with comfort, the full distance may be attempted under the same conditions, that is, at a comfortable jog. But the three-mile run must not be attempted more than once a week. About ten days before the race, the runner may be sent at top speed over the full three miles. After that, he must not repeat the trial before the race, although he must keep up his walking and short-distance running.

"Although the start is not of so much importance to the distance man as it is to the sprinter,

yet it is well for him to get away with the rest of his rivals. When you have to catch up with a man from the very first, there is a strain on your muscles and mentality that is apt to tell on you. In the case of distance-running as in sprinting, the mental attitude of the competitor is an important factor in the matter of either success or failure. Tell Mackay to try to cultivate a happy confidence in himself; a belief that he is as good as the rest of his rivals and perhaps, a bit 'gooder.'

"I think that that's about all, Archie. You know enough about running to realize the importance of obeying the laws of the training table; of faithful observance of the rules of the trainer and those of common sense and decency without honoring which, no boy can ever hope to excel in athletics or, for that matter, any other walk in life.

"I hope to run over to Donchester to witness the inter-class meeting, so look out for me. Give my very kind regards to Harper and the rest of the athletic committee and also to Travers. Tell him that if I hadn't a high regard for Donchester, I'd try to steal him for the sake of Yale. Remember me also to Professor Ridgeley and Mrs. Ridgeley to whom I am very grateful for the kindness that they have shown you. Keep me posted as to how you

are making out at the hurdles, on the track and in the recitation halls. I'm awfully glad to know, old man, that those legs of yours haven't interfered with the work of your brains as I saw by the Christmas report that was sent from Donchester to your father. Keep it up, Arch, and we'll be as proud of you about your studies as I think that some of us now are about your work on the cinders. Affectionately, Uncle Horace."

Archie folded up the letter with a sigh of large content. It is good to be believed in, especially when the one who gives you that belief, is a person whose opinion is worth the having. And Archie then and there renewed his resolve that he would never do anything that would shake his uncle's belief in him. Curiously enough, he found this determination mixed up with a like determination in regard to Mildred!

ARCHIE FOLDED UP THE LETTER WITH A SIGH OF LARGE CONTENT.
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CHAPTER XIX

"Archie, that uncle of yours is a corker!" said Mackay. The two boys, arm in arm, were taking a stroll around the campus, while awaiting the call to breakfast. "It's mighty few athletic swells who'd take the trouble to post insignificant me about a distance run as he has. My word! don't I feel like a bantam rooster! Fancy, being coached by Horace Seymour, Yale—the crackest sprinter that ever was or will be until nephew Archie cuts his records all to pieces!"

By this the reader may know that Archie had, in the interval, told his chum all about Uncle Horace's letter.

"Yes," acquiesced Archie, "uncle's a good sort. Not a mite of hydro about him. Some fellows, if they could run as he can would be so stuck on themselves, that they'd have to use hot water every time they had to think of somebody else. Don't like that sort."

"Nor do I. And say, Archie, I'm not throwing the gentle con into you when I rise to re-

mark that you're like unto Uncky in that same way."

"Guff," cried Archie, who really didn't like to be praised for qualities, although he had no objections to praise for acts. "That's about enough, Mac. And I wonder what the Doctor's going to do to those fellows—Snaggy and the rest." This he said to change the subject.

"Tie stones around their necks and chuck 'em in the Broad I hope. How I do long to meet your uncle again, Arch. I only had a half-minute with him when he was here last fall. Is he jolly? Does he take to kids like you and me? Can you talk right out to him or does he make you feel as if you were trying to chat to the North Pole? Does he—"

"Pile 'em on, pile 'em on," laughed Archie. "Mac, you're a human question-mark. Well, he's just as easy to chin-chin with as it is for you to get away with an apple pie."

"That remark is offensively personal," said Mackay with mock dignity. "And it reminds me that I'm getting awfully drummy." He looked at his watch. "Five minutes more and my tummy will stop grumbling. Arch!"

"Yes?"

"Do you know that—that I feel that I'd hate to make a show of myself on the distance run after the trouble that your uncle has taken

about me." Mackay spoke a little haltingly as boys are apt to do when talking of things that lie close to their hearts.

"Well, you won't do that much, if you stick to the advice that he sent you." Archie's tone was one of encouragement.

Mackay thrust his hands in his pockets and looked thoughtfully at his chum. "I don't intend that he shall think that he wasted his words, Arch," he said at length. "*I'm going to win that race* just because he's—he's been so nice to me. I wish all grown-ups acted to us un-grown-ups as he has done, don't you?"

Mackay, in his boyish fashion had touched on an important truth. The majority of men and women are apt to show little interest in, and small sympathy for the doings and desires of young folk, and so the latter are usually left to their own devices, which is n't always good for them in the way of either fun or behavior. A grown-up who, without undue interference aids youngsters in studies or recreations, can, by reason of his own childish experiences, be a great help to his little friends, lifting them over the stiles that are so many on the road to knowledge, and showing them how to squeeze the last drop of enjoyment out of the sponge of their sports.

Archie nodded in reply to Mackay's remark.

In a vague, boyish way, he, too, had often wondered why more people didn't follow Uncle Horace's example in the manner related, and had come to the philosophic conclusion that the Yale man was the exception to the rule, only he didn't put it to himself quite in that way. But he was right, more's the pity.

"And say, Mac, you needn't tell the rest of the fellows that uncle's likely to come on to the indoor meet," said Archie finally. "They might think that I'm going around crowing about it. If it leaks out, I can't help it, but I don't want it to come from either of us. See!"

"I'll be as dumb as a pickled clam," declared Mackay. "And—there's the breakfast bell!"

"I want to speak to Professor Ridgeley about uncle," said Archie at the close of the meal, "so I'm going to hang around the faculty walk a bit. See you later on the campus."

"Sure it's Professor Ah you want to talk to —not anybody else by the name of Ridgeley?" Mackay grinned as he saw how Archie flushed at the clink.

"Quite sure," retorted Archie; "just as sure as the Cherub was the cause of your quitting football this season."

Mackay hoisted his hands above his head. "You've got the drop on me. Mum's the word

on Mildred." And the door of the hall being reached, the pair parted.

Archie didn't have to wait very long before the Ridgeleys made their appearance. Mildred was the first to catch sight of him as she and her parents came through the faculty door of the hall, and the look of pleased surprise on her face, was very flattering to the awaiting youngster. Indeed, Archie felt so delighted at this that he took little or no notice of the chaffing remarks of some of the "nippies." These last were boys who were supposed to be "spoons" on Mildred; although the phrase according to Donchester, applied to any youngster who showed an undue liking for any girl's society. Some "nippies" usually waited around the faculty lawn after meals to get a glimpse of the little girl and raise their caps to her.

Off came Archie's cap as the family drew near, and the smile that Mildred gave him almost drove the message that he had to give to the professor out of his head.

"You—ah—wish to speak to me—ah—Hartley?" said the professor, as his wife and daughter passed on after both had smiled and nodded at our hero.

"Yes, sir. Uncle Horace wants me to tell you that he is very much obliged for the kind-

nesses that you have shown me, and wishes to be remembered to you and your family, sir."

"That is—ah—very kind of him—ah—Hartley. Pray tell him that—ah—I very greatly —ah—appreciate his—ah—so doing. I—ah—regret that I cannot thank him in—ah—person."

"You will have a chance to do so very soon, sir," said Archie on the spur of the moment "for he's coming over to the inter-class meet." And then he wished that he hadn't told the professor as much, for he knew that the news of Uncle Horace's visit would now be sure to get around. As has been intimated, Professor Ah was a very excellent gentleman, but he lacked the gift of holding the tongue.

The professor looked highly pleased. "That is—ah—very pleasant news,—ah—Hartley," he exclaimed. "I—ah—shall anticipate his—ah —coming. Will you be good enough to—ah—tell him that we shall be—pleased if—ah—he will allow us to be—ah—his hosts during his —stay here?"

"Thank you, sir, but I hardly think that he'll be here more than a day. I'll give him your message though." And once more, Archie lifted his cap. But as he turned toward the campus, he glanced toward the faculty quarters and there to his vast delight, saw Mildred

waiting the arrival of her father. And she saw him, and a tiny handkerchief fluttered as she did. Off came the cap again, and Archie's heart beat as never a sprint could make it beat.

That afternoon, after the boys in training had been put through limbering-up exercises in the gymnasium by Travers, Archie gave the former the message that Uncle Horace had sent. The lined and rugged face of the old trainer lit up with pleasure and pride.

"I'd sooner have a few words like that from a man like Mr. Seymour, than a purse of gold, Hartley," said he. "And why? Because I know Mr. Seymour. He talks as sincerely as he runs swiftly. He's got an athlete's mind as well as an athlete's body; and both are sound and wholesome. I'm awful glad that he's coming. It makes a man proud of his profession to see what real men that profession can develop, Mr. Seymour being a sample of such."

Archie also gave Harper the compliments that Uncle Horace had sent, and through Harper, the greetings to the athletic committee. These messages were much appreciated by the recipients.

"That little chap is like his uncle in lots of ways," said the track captain to his fellow captains that evening, at a meeting of the athletic managers; "not a bit hydro; a little gentleman

and a straight sportsman. Boys like that do credit to Donchester, athletically and in other ways."

And others said things equally appreciative. Can you wonder that Archie's ears burnt uncomfortably that same night?

CHAPTER XX

The days that followed were unhappy ones for the Snaggyites. They were marched to the recitation halls each day by the monitor, but they studied at desks that were removed by some feet from those of their fellows. At meals, they sat at a table apart. Also had the dictum gone forth from the Sign Committee, the body of elder boys that passed on such matters that they were to be "cut out" for an indefinite period, which meant that no boy was to notice, talk or play with them, on pain of being punished likewise. This was about the worst of all. To be cut dead during the daily exercise on the campus that was allowed them—to be treated as if they didn't exist by those with whom they had been at least on speaking terms, was tough indeed.

All this pending the time that Doctor Pardee was awaiting replies from the parents of the culprits. When these at last arrived, he proceeded to act on them. It may here be explained that the Doctor's communications had in each instance expressed the belief that the acts of

the boys warranted their expulsion from Donchester, but that before taking this extreme step, he was desirous of hearing from the parents in regard to why he should show any leniency to the culprits.

Two of the answers were practically to the same effect. Such punishment as the Doctor might see fit to inflict, short of expulsion, would, so Mr. O'Brien declared, meet with his approval. Mr. Blobs went somewhat further than this: He wrote that he very much regretted that Donchester didn't inflict corporal punishment. "With all due deference to you, sir," he wrote, "I think that you make a very great mistake in not using the cane or the strap. Some boys are just naturally bad, like that son of mine, and I hold that a stinging licking would do him more good than all the maxims of morality that you could stuff into him in a term. Spare the rod—you know the old adage. I wish I could lay my hands on him, the young rascal. I'd impress on his mind through his skin the advantages of living a straight life."

"I'm not so sure that Mr. Blobs isn't right—at least in some cases," mused the Doctor. "Well, he will have an opportunity of testing the truth of his theories on the person of his son."

Mr. Pierce, for some unknown reason, did

not seem to grasp the enormity of his son's offense.

Just before the close of recitations that day, Dr. Pardee announced that he would be glad if the students would remain seated when studies were over as he had an announcement to make.

"Bet you a pound of coweyes that it's about the bad 'uns," whispered Evans to Archie, the pair sitting together in the first class section.

Our hero shook his head. "I'd only lose. Look at those fellows."

Evans looked. Snaggy, with his head down, was gnawing his nails nervously; Blobs with twitching mouth was staring in frightened fashion at the Head; Skiddy, his usually pale face an unwholesome yellow, had his eyes fixed on the Doctor also.

"Poor beggars," echoed Evans. "Sort of feel sorry for them."

"Me too, although Mackay would bite my head off if he heard me say so."

"Mac's bark is worse than his bite," whispered Evans. "I think he's got it in for those lads; not for what they've done to him, but for what they have done to you."

Here the Doctor held up his hand for silence and a hush fell on the boys. Then he briefly reviewed the incidents that had led up to the wounding of Emmet and Archie; of the inquiries

that he had subsequently and quietly instituted and the meeting in his office at which the three boys had so flagrantly lied.

"In spite of the grave and cowardly nature of their offense," he went on, "I might have been inclined to leniency, but when they resorted to bold falsehood in order to escape the consequences of their act, I felt that I had a duty to perform to them and the school, that called for drastic action. You all know the estimation that Donchester places on the liar, and, I am happy to say, that the great bulk of you live up to Donchester traditions in this respect. Society—using the term in the larger sense—is based on truth; on the belief that what the individual or the nation states, is verity. The boy or man who lies, is, therefore, a menace to the foundation of society, and should be treated as such. I have not asked you to listen to me in order further to humiliate these unhappy boys, but that you might hear me express my opinion of the falsifier, and to hear the punishment that is now to be meted out to those that are such flagrant examples of the type."

Dr. Pardee went on to say that the offense of Pierce could not be condoned, and he must be expelled. He added that he had, as the reader knows, first intended to expel the trio, but that the earnest appeals of their parents

had had weight with him to the extent of his concluding to suspend Blobs and O'Brien for the remainder of the term instead. "And I may add that I have advised their fathers to apply to them such punishment as the Donchester code does not recognize. In each instance, I have received an assurance that my suggestion will be adopted. Blobs's father in particular, is anxious to begin the reformation of his son through the means in question."

A wailing howl from Blobs here interrupted the Doctor. Blobs had already tasted of the strenuous strap that his father used for educative and corrective purposes. And it came to him that if his whippings for comparatively trivial offenses in the past had been extremely painful, how much more so would be the awaiting thrashing for the offense with which he was now charged!

Skiddy sniveled also. He, too, had a father who had been "taught to the tune of a hickory stick," and, like Mr. Blobs, thought that whipping was a necessary part of a youngster's education. That he was wrong in this didn't alter his son's shrinking from what he knew was coming to him.

"Shut up, both of you," said Snaggy in a hissing whisper; "don't let those dubs see that you've turned the faucet on."

With an effort, his companions obeyed, and the Doctor resumed. "Pierce, Blobs, and O'Brien will therefore leave for home this afternoon. And it is my sincere hope, as I know that it is your hope also, that when the last two return they will no longer exhibit the traits or habits that have brought about their present predicament and prospective punishment."

With that, he dismissed the classes, the members of which poured out on the campus.

"We shall miss 'em; we shall miss 'em," rasped Parrot, when the friends paused outside.

"Why?" asked Evans innocently.

"Because the black background of their badness, kind of set off the dazzling virtues of the rest of us," explained Parrot solemnly.

"I allow that even parrots can talk truth sometimes; though it may be accidental." It was Curtis who spoke, he and Mackay having come upon the others unperceived.

CHAPTER XXI

And now, space will allow only a bare reference to the events of the next week or so. Mildred's birthday party was a very jolly affair indeed. The Spud was there, looking a trifle pale and shaky, but with his blue eyes ablaze with fun and excitement. And, as Archie had said he would, he sang some Irish songs including "Kathleen Mavourneen" and "Rory O'More" in a very sweet boyish voice, and danced a real Irish jig and was clapped on the back by the rest of the boys, and kissed by Mrs. Ridgeley and made a lot of in other ways. I think that Archie felt a twinge of jealousy at the way that Mildred applauded and smiled at the Spud.

Mackay voted that the Ridgeleys were the real thing, and that Mrs. Ridgeley had a genius for making cakes and pies; that the professor was a fine chap, even if he did "Ah" terribly during the evening, and Mildred was all right "as girls went." This remark Archie felt inclined to resent, but concluded that he wouldn't.

Archie gave the little maiden for a birthday gift, a small, silver-mesh purse and a miniature album containing photographs taken by himself, including several of his home and home folk; one of the school buildings; one of the campus, and—this was Archie's pride—one of Mildred herself. Our hero had snapshotted her from the vantage of a tree clump, when she was in the act of descending the steps of the faculty quarters. It was a good picture at that, and showed her bright face peeping from under the fur hat and over the fur boa that she wore on the occasion in question.

And Mildred was more than delighted. "These are just lovely," she said as she turned over the pages of the album, her face beaming with smiles as she did so. "And aren't your father and mother nice! What a beautiful house you live in! I can actually make out some of the boys on the campus"—she stopped suddenly as she came to the last leaf of the book, and the smile left her face—"but—but you haven't a picture of yourself here. Why?" She looked reproachfully at him.

"Oh, I don't know," replied Archie awkwardly. "I—didn't think that you wanted one of mine, you know."

"But I do," declared Mildred, looking at him with frank eyes. "And I shan't like the album

half as much unless your picture is in it. Won't you please have one taken for me?"

Would he? Well, rather! Archie, at that moment, had a feeling that if she had asked him to get her the whiskers of the Man in the Moon, or pull the tail off a rainbow, he would have tried to oblige her. And when she added that she would like to have two photos of him, one in everyday clothes and one in track costume, why—well, he simply felt that words weren't equal to the task of expressing the feelings that bubbled up inside of him.

"I certainly had a gorgeous time of it," said Mackay, as he and Archie were making their way across the campus to their dormitory after the party.

"Yes, and so did I," added our hero, dreamily.

"So I noticed. You and the kid were swopping coos like a pair of turtle-doves all evening. I wonder what the fellows will say about your playing nippie to-night?"

Archie bit his lip but recovered his composure instantly.

"And what they will say about you breaking diet-training rules, by gorging candy, cakes, and pies in the way that you did, I think I can tell you. They'll say—"

"Great goodies!" interrupted Mackay. "It

never struck me that I was at training table! Millagh Murther Mcroo! as the Spud would say. Honest, Archie, the sight of those yum-yum things shoved out the thought of everything else! I was wondering why you side-stepped the goodies. Now I see! But Travers needn't know anything about my playing piggy. I'll tip off the rest of the crowd to keep their mouths shut."

"That wouldn't be right, Mac," said Archie sturdily. "Travers ought to know that you forgot the rules. You'd better talk right out to him."

"You're right," admitted Mackay after a brief reflection, "it would have been sneaky of me to keep quiet about my fall from grace. I'll ask for forgiveness to-morrow afternoon."

"You'll get it from Travers, but you won't from your body," chuckled Archie. "You mark my words, Mac, your wind and your muscles will for the next day or two, go back on you, just to remind you that peach-pies and lemon meringue don't hitch up with athletics."

"Croaker!" cried Mackay. But it all was exactly as Archie had stated, including Travers's forgiveness.

And now the gymnasium work of the prospective competitors being completed, the trainer turned his attention to getting his charges in

condition for the several events in which they were to compete. Such events included the forty-yard dashes; the 300; 600; 1000; one-mile, and three-mile runs; the high hurdles; the low hurdles; high jump; pole vault; putting the sixteen-pound shot and the relay or team races of 1,560 yards. I shall not attempt to describe the methods used by Travers in regard to each of these events, but shall confine myself to the runs only.

This phase of the training was done indoors, in order that the boys might get accustomed to the feeling of the boards beneath their feet; shoes with short spikes being used, as Uncle Horace had predicted that they would be.

The first step was to limber up the muscles of the legs of the competitors in all the running races, which was done by jogging them around the track for 350 yards, Travers coaching the boys meanwhile in regard to form and gait. At the end of the jog, there was a rest during which the trainer gave a little talk to the runners in regard to the points in which they were deficient. Then another jog would be started, and yet another talk given and so the afternoon passed away. In the case of the distance runners, Mackay among them, Archie noted with much satisfaction that Travers used the methods that Uncle Horace had suggested in

his letters in practically every detail, including walks and so forth. Such walks, however, were taken in the open, while the running portion of the training took place indoors.

If you will turn to the first book of this series, you will find that I have spoken therein at some length on the art of sprinting, including starting; breathing; form; the gait; the proper way to carry the arms, head, and body; and the mental aspect of the sport. Also that I have given some detailed and practical advice about training for the dashes, in which I tell of the diet, baths, exercise, and the like. Hence there is no occasion for me to repeat these things in the present volume. Suffice it, then, to say that Travers sought to teach all these matters to his pupils and that, thanks to his skill and patience, the majority of the former did justice to his teachings.

After the limbering-up process had gone on for four or five days, the trainer put the boys at practising starts. This included sprinters and middle-distance and distance competitors. For Travers held that while the instantaneous start was not so necessary in the case of the last as it was in that of the first-named athletes, yet the mental and muscular training was equally useful in every instance. An alert mentality with muscles that instantly obey the

messages sent to them by such mentality, constitutes the make-up of the successful athlete, no matter what his specialty is. And an excellent way to develop both is by practising sprinting starts.

It is a long and often a troublesome task to teach youngsters to get away with the crack of the pistol. Some boys never master it, try as they may. Those of you who read my preceding book, will remember that Archie told Mackay of a boy named Halloran whom he knew, who could beat almost every boy at sprinting when running on time, but was always beaten in a real race because he couldn't train himself to get off with the "gun."

Another difficulty that the novice sprinter has to overcome is that of mastering the "crouch" starting position. Let me once more describe this crouch so that you will understand why it puzzles some green-hands.

When the sprinters are lined up for a start, the starter shouts, "On your mark." At this the runners place the toes of their left feet some five inches to the rear of the starting line, at the same time lowering their right knees until they rest easily on the ground, six inches or so behind the heels of the left feet. Next, the hands are dropped until the finger tips touch the line. Meanwhile, the tips of the left feet

are screwed into the cinders until a fair toe-hold is secured on the track.

"Get set," now calls the starter.

The runners raise their right knees, and simultaneously grind the toes of the right feet into the track, so as to obtain a "purchase" as in the case of the left feet. This raising of the knees throws the weight of the sprinters on their fingers and *over* the starting line. Now, the trick right here is to keep your balance and yet have as much of your weight and body *over* the line as possible. This needs practice, for it is the easiest thing in the world to overshoot the balancing point, when, over you go on your nose!

Bang! goes the starter's pistol. The tense muscles of the boys shoot out, both feet assist in the "push-off," especially the right, and when the runners touch ground after the start, they are in full stride right away.

I would advise those of you who intend to become runners, whether your aspirations are towards sprinting or distance, to practise starts continuously. Apart from the advantage that a good start gives you in a race of any nature, the mental training, as has been said, will be of the utmost value to you during your athletic career.

The starting practice was varied from day to

day by a resumption of the runs, as already told. Only now, the boys who were to take part in the short sprints, including Archie, were occasionally given dashes of twenty to thirty yards. The 300-yard and 600-yard competitors had practice bursts of from 200 to 300 yards. The work ended daily with a jog of three or four hundred yards, followed by a shower-bath and a rub-down. And how the dinner did suffer in consequence, to be sure!

Then, too, when the time came for Travers to turn his attention to the hurdlers, Archie was rather more than delighted to find that the trainer taught that way of taking the jumps that has been described by Uncle Horace. In other words, he showed the boys how to "step" the hurdles instead of leaping them in the ordinary fashion. Naturally, it took several days for the youngsters to get over the balkiness that attacks the majority of novice hurdlers and to master the "step" knack. But they were in earnest. Travers had known enough of boy athlete nature to choose his material for the jumping events well and wisely, and on the whole, the bunch promised to uphold the athletic glory of Donchester at the inter-class meet and the Interscholastic.

One phase of the hurdling art that Uncle Horace hadn't mentioned was also taught by

Travers, and a very important phase it is at that. This is the timing of the stride between the start and the first hurdle, and so to shorten or lengthen it, as the case required, that the hurdle was reached with the foot used for the beginning of the jump, ready for action, so that there was no loss of time or "fiddling" at the hurdle, due to getting ready for the jump.

It may be added that the "step" method saves a lot of tumbles. Under the old plan, there was always a likelihood of the hurdler catching his toe on the top of the obstacle, or tangling himself up with it in other ways. These accidents are practically done away with by the Kraenzlein method, which, by the way, is a highly important matter. The "step" gives confidence to him who uses is, and confidence is everything to the hurdler. And here I may remark that I think that, outside of a dashing sprint, there is no prettier sight to be seen on the athletic track than a hurdle race with the competitors taking the jumps like frightened deer.

On the fifth day of training, the Spud, still wearing a bandage and looking pathetically pale, came down to the gymnasium to witness the proceedings. Dr. Price had recommended that he refrain from study for another couple of weeks, and that he be allowed to mix in with the

other boys in the interval. Hence his appearance at the gym. And in what a hearty way the boys welcomed the little chap among them! The Spud couldn't quite understand why they made such a kindly fuss over him, but he was none the less appreciative for all that.

"Oi loike Donchester, and the bhoys here," he said to Mackay that afternoon when the training was over and he and the other had a chance to talk. "They make me feel as if Oi was at home, so they do." He was sitting on one of the benches, looking very tired, his small wan face contrasting vividly with the healthy sunburnt countenance of his protector.

Mackay passed his arm around the Spud's neck. "Do you, old man? That's good. And you must get busy picking up your strength and health, so that next term, you'll be able to join us in this fun." Mackay gave an inclusive sweep to the larking, laughing boys in the building. "Archie says that he believes you'd make a good runner, and what he doesn't know about running, isn't worth listening to."

"Sure, that's foine," replied the Spud, flushing with pleasure. "Oi loike Archie, too. You are all moighty good to me. 'Tis myself that wishes Oi could pay ye all back for treating me as ye're doing."

"Rot," cried Mackay, "who wants you to

'pay' as you say? Besides, didn't you introduce us to coweyes? And can we ever repay you for so doing? Aunt Sally says that the coweyes have knocked out all the rest of her candy, and that one of her daughters is busy all the time making 'em, so blooming popular have they become among our fellows and the town chaps, too. She ought to let you have all you want free gratis, and for nothing, because you put her on to 'em."

Spud's laughter bubbled up with a sound like a brook hidden by summer foliage.

"She's noice, though she's black and smokes." The Spud had been taken to Aunt Sally's by the quintet of chums on the occasion of the lady being given the coweye recipe, and so he knew of her skin and weakness. "But Oi don't want her to give 'em to me as long as Oi can pay f'r thim."

"Quite right, Spud," said Mackay approvingly. "And here's Archie."

"Hull-o, Spud! But I *am* glad to see you here," cried our hero as he patted the shoulder of the youngster. "How's the cocoanut?" He gently touched the wound on the head of the lad.

"Sure Oi get giddy sometimes, but the Doctor says Oi'll be around making monkey-shines

soon enough. 'Tis you Oi'm glad to see," he added, shyly.

"Not a bit more glad than I am to see you, Spuddy, old boy."

"When will Snaggy be coming back?" asked the Spud after a thoughtful pause.

"He will never come back. Aren't you glad?"

"Oi'm not *that.*" The Spud's tone was one of decision.

"You're not?" asked Archie with surprise. "And why not? Would you have him back again?"

"Oi would."

"Why?"

"Because Oi want to lick him!"

CHAPTER XXII

"Mac, how do you feel?" asked Archie of his chum one morning. The inter-class meet was only three days away, and the young athletes were in the pink of condition.

"Fine as a razor blade," replied Mackay as he buttoned his collar before the mirror. "Feel as good as I look, and that's 'nuff said."

Archie eyed him critically. "Yes. You'll do. Lost the puffy look and yellow color that you used to have when you hadn't learned to put the drag on the wheel of the candy and pie wagon. Got a clear white to your eyes, too. They don't look like a couple of fried eggs any more. Skin's smooth and healthy, and you don't now puff like a dying whale when you run a block—"

"I went a breezy jog of two miles yesterday afternoon, and never wheezed a wheeze," said Mackay proudly.

"Good. How much weight have you lost since Travers took you in hand?"

"Nearly twelve pounds."

"And all fat that had no business on your

body in the first place. No wonder you feel better now that you've gotten rid of it."

"The wonder is that I was such a donkey that I didn't find out the good that comes from athletics before—before you came, Archie. Of course, I used to train a bit during the football season, but nothing regular, you know. And now, who-o-o-ee!" Mackay's appreciation of the life athletic was too keen for words, and so he howled it instead.

Archie smiled the smile of him who knows. "Pity that other chaps who put in their time loafing and smoking cigarettes and acting lazy, don't know how jolly it is to be able to sprint or run distance or hop the hurdles—"

"In other words, *live!*" cried Mackay enthusiastically. "That's what athletics mean—the right way of living! And until you've learned that, you haven't lived at all. I do believe that I was cut out for a preacher and not the lawyer that Dad intends me to be," he added as an afterthought.

"Perhaps you'll be a gospel-athlete yet. They're good sorts I think. The rector of our parish at home, used to be stroke in the Harvard eight-oar—his name is Burleigh, the Rev. Wynston Burleigh, and he's bully, Mac. Father says that his sermons are as wholesome as he is, and that they grip you in the same way that

he used to grip an oar. All the fellows in the parish like him and go to church regularly."

"What you say sounds good to me, Arch. I bet that you like to go to church, just 'cause the Rev. Mr. Bubble—"

"Burleigh," corrected Archie.

"Burleigh is what you say he is."

Archie nodded, and then said, after a pause:

"You've some crack chaps to beat on the three-mile run. How do you think you'll make out?"

Mackay hesitated before replying. "I don't want you to think that I've a streak of hydro, Archie, but I—well, I'm not a scrap skeered of any of 'em. I know that it won't be as easy as eating eggs, but you watch me. I'll pull it off, or at least I think I will."

"That's the ticket!" cried Archie. "Uncle Horace says that confidence in yourself is the first step toward victory."

Mackay nodded. "And if I do come in ahead, you may tell him that it was the advice that he sent to me in your letter, that made me win. I want him to feel that he wasn't wasting words on me."

Mackay had unconsciously given expression to the great truth that our words and actions affect others for good or evil to an extent that we fail to realize.

"I used to feel that way when he coached me on sprinting," said Archie. "I always liked running, you know, but I liked it all the better because he helped me out."

"Uncles like yours are great institutions, Arch. I've got nunkeys, too, but they are big, solemn blokes who seem to forget that they ever had a kidhood, and aren't interested in kids in consequence. Father's all right, but I'm not stuck on his brothers."

Archie nodded understandingly.

"I s'pose you feel cock-sure of pulling off the dash?" said Mackay, after a few moments of silence.

"Y-e-e-s," drawled Archie, "pretty sure. Of course, I'll be at scratch and Evans has improved a good deal since the last meet and will probably get a good yard start, and there are several others who are no slouches, but for all that, I think I'll make out, barring accidents."

"It's well to be you to feel so sartain sure. But suppose you don't win?"

"Then I'll be licked, silly! What a question!"

"But won't you feel terribly about it if some one comes in ahead of you?"

"No. What would be the use? Only thing to be done is to try again."

Mackay laughed. "Upon my word, Arch, you are the cool kid!"

Archie shrugged his shoulders. "I don't see that I am, Mac. What's the use of getting hot over a defeat? If the other fellow is better than you are, and you've done your best, why, that's the end of it. There's no disgrace in being licked under such conditions."

"It never struck me that way before," said Mackay slowly. "You're right, Archie. Who or what taught you to look on these things in such a sensible way?"

"Dad, uncle, and athletics," replied Archie.

CHAPTER XXIII

It was Saturday and the much-anticipated day of the inter-class meet had now arrived, and the Donchesterian atmosphere was chock-full of expectancy and anticipation and hilarity. Under usual conditions it is a pretty hard matter to keep youthful spirits corked up, but when they are stimulated by a happening such as the meet, why, it's just like shaking a bottle of ginger-pop just before you open it. Then, as you know, it goes off with a bang! and effervesces all over the place.

The morning recitations represented the cork in this instance, and I think that the faculty as well as the boys were very glad indeed when they came to an end; the halls emptied and the campus filled with crowds of excited, shouting, cheering and racing youngsters. The scenes that attended the try-outs meeting of the preceding fall, as related in my former book, were repeated in this instance, the school song was sung by lusty-lunged groups of boys at frequent intervals; the school yell of:

PANTHER! TIGER! LI-ON! WHIRR!
UP AND AT 'EM DON-CHES-TER!
RAH! RAH! RACK 'EM!
BOOM! BOOM! CRACK 'EM!
WHOOPEE! WHOOPEE! DON-CHES-TER!

was given with ear-splitting earnestness in all parts of the campus. Also were the various competitors for the forthcoming events lauded in verses composed on the spur of the moment or in paraphrase of the "slap" song of the school. Perhaps you may remember that the latter went in this way:

"Sprinter! sprinter! sprinter! Who?
Archie Hartley! he will do!
See him leave 'em! See him skim!
Archie Hartley! Good for him!"

I have used the verse that the admirers of Archie chanted in his honor for the purpose of illustration; but, of course, where the rhymes were about another boy, his name was inserted and an allusion made to his athletic feat also.

Then there was waving of school and class flags; the occasional "hoisting" or taking of popular boys on the shoulders of their admirers, and more cheering and impromptu processions and other manifestations of youthful high spirits.

Half an hour before lunch bell rang, Uncle

Horace arrived, and wasn't Archie glad to see him? Well, rather! And after he, the uncle, had paid his respects to Dr. Pardee, and the Ridgeleys, who claimed him as their guest, Archie, proud as a peacock with two tails—proud of his distinguished relative, you know—took him to see Harper and the rest of the athletic committee and then trotted him back to the campus where he made him once more known to his group of chums and also the Spud and the Cherub. And the latter soared to the Seventh Heaven when Seymour, eyeing his inches, asked him if he expected to go to college after Donchester. To which the Cherub blushingly replied that he did, and that he had told his father that Yale was his choice.

"A very good choice, too," said Uncle Horace cheerily. "I'll mention your name to our football captain and he'll get in correspondence with you. Glad to have met a lad of your inches and build."

And the good-hearted Yale man patted the Spud on the head and told him to get his strength back as soon as possible so that Archie might teach him how to run; and he said nice things to Mackay and gave him good luck for the coming distance run; and he joked with Parrot; spoke to Curtis of points and places in Kansas that he had visited; and complimented

Evans on his sprinting prowess, "about which Archie has told me," he added. Then he spoke to many more boys who pressed forward, anxious to see or talk to the famous athlete, for like all men who are worth while, Uncle Horace didn't have a grain of "standoffishness" in his make-up. And so he made his way up the campus toward the Ridgeleys' quarters, reaching them just in time to tidy up, before the ringing of the lunch bell.

And wasn't he eyed and talked about during the meal? And didn't Archie have questions fired at him from all quarters about Uncle Horace? And didn't Mildred watch the latter, her interest in him being due to the fact that he was Archie's uncle, if she had only known it? And didn't Seymour seem to enjoy himself? To all of which the reply is "yes!"

And didn't the tongues of Donchester wag during that meal? Didn't the boys who were not at the training table eye those who were, with friendly envy? And didn't these last try to make out that they were not aware of the attention that they were exciting, and didn't they quite fail to appear unconscious thereof? And didn't Mildred cast shy little smiling glances at Archie, and didn't his face burn when he caught her so doing? And didn't Mackay on more than one occasion, intercept the looks of

the couple and when he snickered in consequence, didn't Archie feel a mad desire to throw a plate at him? And didn't our hero, then and there, make up his mind that he would both win the events for which he was entered, just for Mildred's and Uncle's sake? To all of these "didn'ts" the reply may be in the affirmative.

The meet was to begin at 2:30 P. M. By a wise arrangement on the part of the Head, the lunch started half an hour earlier than usual and was over by 1:30 o'clock. This gave the young athletes a chance to digest their food before beginning work. As I have said elsewhere, it is impossible for an athlete to be at his best when his stomach is full. You have a certain amount of vital energy that is available for the various functions of your body. Now, if a part of that energy is being used for one function, it stands to reason that you will have less for another function that is going on at the same time. Thus, when the energy is busy with the digestive process, you cannot very well divert it for athletic purposes, and vice versa. Hence it is, that the athlete who is stupid enough to eat heartily just before taking part in a contest of any kind, is bound to lack speed, vim, strength, and alertness. A famous Indian runner used to fast twenty-four hours before he started in a race, so it is said. I don't advise

you to go to that extreme, but don't forget the hint that I have just given you. I'd just like to add here that it is the attention that the athlete pays to the little things that concern his bodily well-being that counts. He can't afford to neglect a single one of them. You remember the old story of the knight who, flying from his pursuers, was finally captured because he had neglected to attend to a nail in his horse's shoe. It is the same, in a sense, with the athlete. Neglect of an apparently trivial matter may result in his going down to defeat.

After the lunch, the competitors went to the gym again and after a time of walking, chatting and otherwise conducting themselves quietly under the eye of the trainer, adjourned to their dressing-rooms. This was the signal for the doors of the big building to be opened in order to admit the clamorous crowd outside.

With a cheering rush, the Donchesterians overflowed the front seats, rippled back to the seats behind, and, like a human tide, gradually filled up every empty space that remained, except that part of the gym that was set aside for the faculty. Curtis and Parrot, bearing the Spud between them, struggled and scrambled to a front seat near the finish mark of the dashes and nearly opposite the faculty seats. Later, came Dr. Pardee, the professors and their fami-

lies, and Uncle Horace. Whereupon, there was a general removal of caps by the boys and all of them began the school song, led by the school glee club. A fine old song it is at that; and when some hundreds of sweet young voices give it tongue, it stirs you to the heart core. Let me repeat that stanza of it that I gave you in the first book of this series. Here it is:

"Fair Donchester! Fair Donchester! Upon thy emerald hill,
Thou sittest like a queen enthroned, and crowned with heaven's blue;
The subject city at thy feet seems waiting on thy will,
The maples, bowing at thy side, are like to vassals true!

(CHORUS)

"Oh, Donchester, fair Donchester,
Thy memories shall thrill
When I no more shall know thy walls,
Or climb again thy hill!
Ah, Alma Mater, loving sons,
Who true remain, though far or near, on sea or distant shore!"

And I don't believe that there was a boy who sang it who didn't catch the inspiration of the words or the air and didn't somehow or other feel the better for so doing. The strains of the song penetrated into the dressing-room and the

boys there as well as Travers and the captains, stopped the work of preparation, and joined in the words and chorus. Music is a splendid thing when it is used to interpret the feelings of a lot of boys or men who think or feel alike, as the Donchesterians did about their school. Such music stays with you all your life. Some day I may tell you of the circumstances under which the old song came back to Archie when he was among savages a good many thousand miles from the United States, and what a consolation and encouragement it then was to him. But dear me, what a bad habit I have of wandering away from the trail of my story!

After the song, came cheers for the Doctor and for individual members of the faculty. And the way that they were given, bore testimony to the popularity of these grave and reverend gentlemen, and the soundness of the Donchester lungs.

"Now, three cheers for Miss Mildred," rasped Parrot. Whereupon the school rose *en masse* and gave a triplet of roars that seemed to shake the oak rafters of the gym at the same time waving its collective caps.

"And a Coo!" cried Curtis, when the din had subsided somewhat. According to Donchester usage, the "Tiger"—a medley of ferocious yells —followed cheers for a member of the male sex,

but the "coo" was the tailpiece in the case of a lady.

So the school "Cooed," and the sound was like a thousand pigeons making love at the same time. At the end of the queer tumult, Mildred rose and curtsied her thanks. Thereupon, the school once more cheered itself hoarse. And just then, there entered from the door that led to the captains' quarters in the gymnasium, the captains themselves, Travers, the scorers, the judges, starters and other officials. At this the pandemonium among the spectators broke out anew.

CHAPTER XXIV

And now on the announcement board was placed the title of the first event of the afternoon, which was the high jump, for juniors and seniors. The bell for the senior competitors rang, and there trotted out on the floor, seven lads who moved as if they were made out of steel springs. And oh, the roar of applause with which they were welcomed! But of this event or others, except those in which Archie and his chums took part, mention must be omitted, the space available being responsible therefor. Yet I may add that the results of such events were, on the whole, highly satisfactory to the athletic committee, as indeed they were to the school at large. The Donchesterians knew precisely the time and distances of their chief rivals, the Ameswood boys, and as the figures of the present meeting that equaled or beat these were placed on the board, the uproar of applause that followed was simply deafening.

Next came the pole vault, followed by putting the shot. Then came the one-mile run, which was won handily by a second-class boy named

Homer, in reasonably good time. The announcement now made that the 40-yard dash was the next feature on the programme, was greeted by cheers that were as long-sustained as they were ear-splitting! Donchester knew that it was the proud possessor of a boy who promised to be a marvel of the track, and it didn't hesitate to express its appreciation of the fact.

There were eleven competitors for the dashes, divided into three heats; four in two and three in the other. Drawing for the heats had taken place before the first set of sprinters appeared on the floor, Evans being among the lucky ones to run in the initial trial. Incidentally, Archie was once more playing in bad luck, for he had drawn for the third heat. You can easily understand that those who take part in the third heat, don't have as much time for rest and recuperation as do those that run in the first or even second heats, before the decisive run-off or final takes place. The drain on the reserve energy of the body that a sprint brings about is considerable, and hence only the athlete with good recuperative or "picking-up" powers is unaffected by running a heat and a final in rather quick succession. Fortunately, Archie was the possessor of such powers.

Evans's rivals in the first heat included a

couple of the boys against whom he had run in the try-outs. These were Hopkins and O'Malley, the other lad being Creasey. Evans was scratch man, Creasey being a yard in front of him and the other two a yard and a half and two yards respectively. The start was good and clean and Evans won by a bare foot in the satisfactory time of 5 1-5 seconds. He also received rounds of applause that were in strong contrast to the chilly reception given his victory at the try-out meeting when he was a protégé of Snaggy. And was he keenly and gratefully conscious of the difference between the two occasions?

The second heat went to Ambrey of the first, who managed to snatch victory from his old rival and former conqueror, Reynolds, by a scant couple of inches. It was a rattling dash and was deservedly cheered. Time, 5 1-5 seconds.

And now the crowd went wild as Archie, Dodson, and Brown trotted on the floor. The two latter boys had competed against our hero in the try-outs as the readers of the other book will remember, Brown showing remarkably good form and speed. He had trained faithfully and improved greatly, the latter being in no small measure due to the unselfish advice given him by Archie.

As one burst of cheering died down, another rose in its place, and for nearly five minutes there was such a hullabaloo that you couldn't hear yourself think. The Spud, his cheeks flushed, and his eyes blazing with excitement, was shouting at the top of his voice, waving his small arms frantically meantime. Curtis, on his left, gave a respectable imitation of cowboy yells, the shrill notes of which rose clear above the deeper tones of the din. Parrot, on the right, added to the row by long-drawn-out and shrieking whistles that pierced the ear-drums of the youngsters around him. Meantime, the announcer was waiting patiently for a chance to make himself heard.

By degrees the racket died down and at length subsided altogether. But just as the announcer opened his mouth to introduce the event and its contestants, Parrot cried, "Whoee! Polly wants Archie! Who? Who? Who? Archie Hartley, Archie Hartley. Whooeee!" in a voice so ridiculously like that of the bird from which he took his nickname that the boys howled and started the applause all over again. Even Dr. Pardee laughed, as did the professors, and as for Mildred, she clapped her hands and waved her handkerchief in an ecstasy of delight. I don't think that she ever had felt so friendly toward Parrot as she did on this occasion.

Archie, modest little chap that he was, didn't altogether enjoy being thus thrust into the limelight, although he appreciated the kindness that caused it. So he and the others stood at the starting point, the whole trio silent and embarrassed, yet pleased.

Finally, the tired throats and beseeching gestures of Travers brought silence and the sprinters lined up ready for the orders of Professor Higby who had taken the place of Munkettrick as starter. Higby was a little, high-strung man with a high, piercing voice who was known as "Springs" by the Donchesterians on the score of his gait, which suggested that he had toes that threw him up and forward at every step. A deep hush fell on the crowd. Archie, taking advantage of the momentary pause, glanced at the faculty seats. Craning her pretty head over the edge of the partition that fenced in the seats was Mildred, and the lad's pulses gave a sudden and happy start as he saw that her eyes were fixed on him. Right behind her sat Uncle Horace, a slight smile of entire confidence in his nephew, lighting up his handsome, ruddy face.

Archie felt that nothing short of an earthquake could stop him from winning the heat and for that matter, the race. He was in fine fettle, anyhow.

"On your marks," shrilled "Springs."

The trio of sprinters obeyed. Now it was that what I may call the mental side of athletic training, was made manifest in the case of our hero. As he dropped to the first position of the "crouch," he concentrated his mind on what was about to happen to the exclusion of all else —the crowd, Mildred, Uncle Horace, everything. His mentality, like his muscles, was tense, coiled, ready to leap upon the coming effort when loosed by the starter.

"Get set!"

Archie was poised on, or rather over, the line to the fraction of an inch, his faculties strained to the utmost to catch the crack of the pistol. Professor Higby took his time ere pressing the trigger, so long indeed, that ere he did so, Archie's finger tips were beginning to tremble by reason of the stress put upon them. But at last—

"Crack!"

Automatically, our hero's compressed muscles shot him forward as if he were the missile of a catapult. The others got off in excellent shape also. The crowd cheered and roared at the flying figures. Archie ran as he always did, which was as if he knew that others of equal or better sprinting ability were competitors against him. So it was that the result was never in doubt

from the first. In a trifle more than two seconds, he had overhauled the other two boys, at four seconds he was leading, and when he reached the tape in four and four-fifths seconds he was a yard and a half ahead of Brown who was only a few inches in advance of Dodson.

Archie had broken the Donchester record for the forty-yard dash!

Well, there's no use trying to describe the scene that followed the announcement of the time and what it meant to Donchester's athletic fame. But when the facts were posted on the board, the school completely lost its head in the enthusiasm. As if by previous arrangement the boys leapt from their seats, scrambled over the floor, swept aside the expostulating officials and seizing Archie, proceeded to "hoist" him in approved fashion. He tried to break away from his admirers, but it was no use, and so, flushed and embarrassed, he had to allow himself to be carried thrice around the gymnasium, while the whole gathering sang the school song and gave the school yell many times over. Archie, however, became somewhat reconciled to the honor thus thrust upon him, when on passing the faculty seats, he saw Mildred, her cheeks glowing with excited delight, cheering as loudly as she knew how. And the smile she gave him! Uncle Horace waved his

hand and shouted, "Good boy!" It speaks well for the balanced nature of the lad that all this adulation didn't turn his head in the slightest. Some youngsters would have gone completely out of their wits in consequence. Not so Archie. He liked praise, as all of us do, although he didn't quite like the noisy and strenuous form that it took on this occasion, but when it was all over, he was the same modest, likable little chap that he always was, with not a trace of that most detestable of all boyish maladies—conceit.

Well, at last he was released and hurried to his dressing-room to find awaiting him there Evans and the rest of the boys who were in the dashes. Evans's face lit up with pleasure and he held out his hand as Archie entered.

"I'm awfuly glad, Archie," said he heartily. "This is just splendid. Of course, I've no show against you in the final, but that doesn't make any difference, you know."

"Much obliged, Evans," said Archie who was hard put to make a suitable reply, "but I hope you do your hardest to lick me yet."

"I surely will. I'll—"

The door opened and there stood Captain Harper. He, too, held out his hand to Archie.

"Hartley," he said, "you've made Donchester proud of you, and I want to thank you my-

self and also in the name of the athletic committee."

"Thank you, sir," said Archie quietly.

"The rest of you did first-rate, also," went on Harper addressing the other sprinters. "Keep going as you did to-day and we'll surely bring back Ameswood's scalp with us when we return from Boston next month."

And with that he left for the floor.

Archie looked at Evans. "Good sort, Harper, isn't he?"

"None better."

"Heartens you up every time he opens his mouth," declared Brown.

"Makes you feel like doing or dying," asserted Creasey.

"Sort of chap you'd—you'd—" Hopkins hesitated for a fitting simile.

"You'd run your legs off for," suggested O'Malley coming to the rescue with a flash of native wit.

"Thankee. You've hit it," said Hopkins, solemnly.

"I guess your uncle's pretty proud of you to-day, Archie?" This came from Evans.

"I hope so," said Archie frankly.

The talk was cut short by the call for the contestants in the three-mile run to draw for places. Mackay obeyed the summons, to re-

turn presently with the news that he was fourth in a field of six.

I need hardly explain that when a run takes place on a circular track, the holders of the high numbers are at a comparative disadvantage as compared with those who hold the low numbers, who are on the inside—the "pole" as it is called. The high-number men have to run farther and more swiftly on the turns than do the low numbers, for precisely the same reason that the tire of a wheel when in action, covers more space than does the hub. So that Mackay being number 4, had to travel faster than number 1 in order to get over the same amount of ground in the same time.

"Might have been worse, might have been better," said Archie. "But those legs and that wind will pull you through, never fear."

"And that uncle also," added Mackay. "Bet a lead bullet that I won't forget that he'll be looking on. I've *got* to win, Arch."

Archie smiled and nodded. "Now you're chortling. Start feeling like that, and you'll end by feeling a winner."

"Three-mile competitors on the floor," now shouted one of Harper's assistants.

"Wish me luck, Arch," said Mackay, pausing for a moment on his way to the door.

"Luck and lots of it, old man," replied our

hero. "Don't forget what Travers told you to-day about 'nursing' the man ahead and saving yourself for the last three or four laps."

"No." And as he went the other boys sent him a shower of good wishes also.

"I wonder if Harper would mind if we took a peek at the run," said O'Malley as he glanced at the flight of stairs that led from the dressing-room up to a small private gallery that overlooked the gymnasium.

"I guess not. But *I'm* going to relax until the final takes place." So saying, Archie threw himself on his back on the floor and let every muscle "go," as it were. Which is a capital way to rest up whether before or after a strenuous effort.

O'Malley hesitated. "What are you going to do, Evans?" he asked.

"Same as Archie." And with a laugh, he spread himself loosely on the floor matting.

"I'm going to be run off my underpinning by you fellows, anyhow," said O'Malley, after a moment's pondering. "So what's the use? The gallery for mine!" And he bounded up the stairway.

In a dreamy fashion, Archie and his companion now heard the muffled cheering of the spectators, broken by a brief silence; then the sharp bark of the starting pistol, followed by a hurri-

cane of shouts, whistles, and handclappings that gradually died away as the race progressed, or were renewed at brief intervals as the runners passed knots of their friends.

At the end of some minutes, O'Malley clattered down the stairs. "It's a bully run," he said excitedly. "All of 'em are pretty well bunched, and going strong. Mackay has fallen back to fifth place, and is running easily."

"I guess he has sized up the other chaps and is playing a waiting game until the time comes to extend himself," sagely commented Archie. "Uncle told him to do as much. Say, O'Malley, do you know that you're taking it out of yourself by getting all worked up over this run?"

"What do I care, Arch?" replied the lad with a laugh. "I'd sooner see this three-miler than run myself."

"Then I'm through 'hooping' you." And Archie flopped back on the floor, whence he had raised himself to address the unheeding one. "Hooping" was the school term for warning or remonstrance.

O'Malley returned no more with tidings, but after the lapse of many minutes, some scattered shouts that finally developed into sustained and frantic cheers told the listeners that the spurts that betokened the beginning of the end had

begun. The applause grew in volume and Evans stirred uneasily. Archie, wide-eyed and listening, made no move, however.

"I think I'll take just one look at the finish," said Evans at length. He rose to his feet. "Won't you come along, Archie?"

Our hero shook his head lazily. "No, I'm very comfy where I am," he laughed. At this Evans took to the stairs, three at a time.

Athletics had taught Archie how to perform that most difficult of tasks; the conquering of our desires for the sake of accomplishing a given purpose. He wanted to see the finish of the three-mile run very much indeed, but he knew that the excitement of his so doing, would rob him of an appreciable amount of reserve energy, every atom of which he would need in the coming final. So he stayed on the floor. The boy or the man who has obtained such mastery over himself, is capable of practically any achievement.

Presently the cheers grew louder and louder, culminating in rounds of frantic applause. Next came a momentary silence, and then the shouts broke out again like peals of thunder. Evans and O'Malley came down the stairs together.

"Mackay won from Bennett of the second by inches, Apsworth being a close third! They're

hoisting him! I couldn't see the time as the board had its back to us, but I guess it's good, for Harper and his crowd are grinning their heads off," shouted Evans.

"Awfully glad to hear it. Good old Mac. Won't he be joyful!" Archie's face glowed with satisfaction. "This will be the first bar that he's taken since he's been at Donchester. And it's a silver one at that."

"Luckier than I am," laughed the other. "But he didn't have to buck up against an Archie Hartley in the three-mile."

CHAPTER XXV

Our hero was about to reply, when the banging of doors, the tramping of feet and the chatter of approaching voices, told of the coming of the distance runners. Into the dressing-room burst Mackay, looking a trifle worn as to face and lined about the mouth, but otherwise one vast chuckle.

"I've done it, Arch!" he gasped as he sank on a chair.

Archie, who had sprung to his feet, smote the victor mightily between the shoulders.

"More glad than I can say, Mac! And won't Uncle Horace be glad, too! And aren't we all glad!" He looked around on the group.

For answer Evans lifted up his voice and began

"Distance, distance, distance, who?"

In came the others with a crash

"Mackay! Mackay! he will do
Three-mile runner, see him speed!
Mackay, Mackay, good indeed!"

"Thanks, fellow-citizens, thanks. This spontaneous tribute of regard affects me deeply," began Mackay as he rose from his chair and bowed right and left demonstratively. "Couched in prose, such phrase would be touching, but when shaped in lofty rhyme, it is—"

"Oh, stop it, Mac," laughed Archie, "or we'll swear that you've been rubbing feathers with Parrot and have caught the gab-germ from him."

"In other words, fellows, it's ripping nice of you to say these glad things to me," concluded Mackay. "When I get you all at Aunt Sally's, I'll—"

"Final for forty-yard dash! On the floor!" interrupted the summons.

"To the gallery for mine," cried Mackay, as he made for the stairway. "And Archie, fond youth, eat 'em up for the sake of Donchester and yours truly."

"I'll try to for my own sake," cried Archie in reply.

"Cannibal," hissed Evans, "but I know that we're your grub all right, all right!"

The uproar that had greeted Archie's previous appearance on the floor was multiplied by three or thereabouts when he now put his feet thereon. It was only when he and his two competitors got the word, "On your marks,"

that the clamor ceased. The deep hush that followed was startling by way of contrast.

As a puff of smoke spurted from the muzzle of the pistol, the trio made a beautiful start, clean, even, and dashing. In just a second, however, Archie gave Evans a view of the back of his neck. And in a second more he did likewise to O'Malley. After that, it was all over, but the carrying away of the tape. Evans was badly beaten by a full two yards, while poor O'Malley was nowhere. What was more, Archie had equaled the record of his previous heat!

It must be left to the imagination of the reader to picture the scene of enthusiasm gone stark, staring crazy, that followed. Again the Donchesterians swept over the floor and toward the youngster with the intentions of once more hoisting him. But Harper, anticipating the move, had massed the members of the athletic committee close by the tape. Before Archie's fervent admirers could reach him, the committee formed a protecting cordon around the lad and marched him back to the dressing-rooms, the progress of the party being much impeded by the dense throng of yelling, leaping lads, who tried to break the formation and get at our hero.

"Now, Hartley," said Harper when they were

once more inside the athletic quarters and the door had been banged on the faces of the still cheering mob, "I want you and the other sprinters who are entered for the hurdles to rest up for that event, which, as you know, is the final feature of the programme. And you've done yourself proud to-day." He shook the boy's hand heartily and was gone.

Mackay, who was impatiently awaiting Archie's return, fairly hugged the latter, as the track captain turned his back.

"Ain't I the proud party to think that this same, small world-beater"—he shook Archie affectionately—"was my minny when he first struck Donchester!" he cried gleefully. "I'll have to hoop my head with rawhide to keep it from bursting; it's swelling at such a rate! I don't know how to express the gleesome, giggling gladsomeness that bubbled up inside me when I saw you make those dubs look as if they were standing still!"

"Oh, stop, Mac, you old stupid," said Archie with a laugh. "And Evans and O'Malley aren't dubs by any means. They are high-grade sprinters, but—but, well, I was a little better, that's all."

"A little better?" cried O'Malley who, with Evans had caught the last words of the sentence as he entered the room. "A little better?

A big heap better! Why, you simply ran away from us. Eh, Evans?"

The latter nodded. "But after all, Archie has to thank Mackay for his easy win," he added while his eyes twinkled mischievously.

"Me? How?" asked Mackay.

"If it hadn't been for you, we shouldn't have been kept busy hopping up and down stairs watching your confounded race, but instead, should have been doing as Archie did, saving ourselves for the final," explained Evans with a grin.

"Oh, well, it was worth while losing a race just to have the privilege of watching me," said Mackay complacently.

"Which reminds me that I'm going to do as Harper wants me and the rest of us to do, rest up for the hurdles. Mac, your chat is lovely, but I wish you'd adjourn to parts outside while—"

"While you go seepy, eh! Ungrateful youth, after the orchids I've been handing you." But he went, nevertheless.

"Archie," said Evans as he sprawled on the floor by the side of our hero, "I'm mighty glad you won."

"Same here with 'glads' added," said O'-Malley.

"Thanks. But I'm sorry you lost," replied Archie.

"I do honestly believe that you are," assented Evans.

After this there was quiet, during which Archie found himself trying to puzzle out why it was that he felt so pleased with the remark that Evans had just made. Can the reader give the answer?

CHAPTER XXVI

The call for the hurdlers came at last, and found Archie and Evans rested and ready. When the floor was reached, they and the three other lads who were entered for the contest, saw that the hurdles were so arranged that the last one was opposite the faculty seats. There were four hurdles arranged diagonally across the gymnasium, so as to allow the jumps to be made on a straightaway. As Archie noted the arrangement for the finish, he simultaneously caught sight of Mildred's bright face turned eagerly toward the starting-line, and then and there determined that he would be the first over the last hurdles that directly faced her seat.

The toughest and most enthusiastic of schoolboy throats grow a bit tired after some hours of hard and more or less continuous cheering, and so it was that the greeting given to the hurdlers in general, and Archie in particular, was hoarse and croaky. But those who hadn't strained their vocal cords did the best they could, while those who couldn't coax a cheer out

of them swung arms and caps or whistled shrilly on their fingers or jumped up or down frantically. And among the last was the Spud.

The start for the hurdles was of the stoop, not so much of the crouch order, and Archie caught himself wondering as to why this was, as indeed he had often done during practice. This start was made at the extreme lower end of the gymnasium. Archie had determined on a plan of action that he proceeded to put into effect as the race developed and as will be related. Athletic sports are a fine aid to what I may call the strategic instinct.

The pistol barked, and with what cheers the crowd could muster the race began. As I have said before, there is hardly a prettier sight to be seen on the athletic track than a hurdle race, the contestants skimming over the level stretches and rising at the obstacles like flying birds. It was so in this case, and with the taking of the first hurdle the school seemed to get its voice back by reason of its enthusiasm and so broke out in roaring admiration.

Hepner, the boy on Archie's right lost his head in the excitement of the start and the count of his stride also. So when he came to the first hurdle, he fumbled, balked and had to run back a little way to get an impetus for the jump. For the rest of the race, he did well, but

the handicap of his balk was too much for him and he finished last.

The other four boys took the hurdles as one. At the second, Archie and Evans were neck and neck, the other two lads beginning to trail behind a trifle. The crowd, now intensely interested in the contest, had forgotten to cheer and was silently watching the flying forms.

At the third hurdle our hero and his rival rose in the air as if linked together. The truth was that Evans's longer legs gave him a slight advantage over Archie at the jumps which offset the greater speed of the latter on the flat. In this way the two factors had equalized matters so far. And now it was that Archie's strategy began to manifest itself. As the toes of the lads touched the ground, Archie let out the links of the speed that he had been reserving for just that purpose, shot ahead like the proverbial greased lightning and was poised in the air in the act of jumping, before Evans had raised his foot for the same purpose. Again as his foot felt the boards, Archie put on a terrific burst of speed. He had calculated that Evans was about going his limit at the intervening sprints and he remembered his uncle's words that "a hurdle race is won on the feet, not at the obstacles."

The result justified his calculations. Evans

At the second, Archie and Evans were neck and neck.
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was beaten by a yard and a half. Handsfield of the second was a bad third and the other two boys were nowhere.

From the faculty seats came a chorus of "bravos," amid handclappings. Archie turned and waved. Dr. Pardee was beaming at him, so were Professor and Mrs. Ridgeley. Uncle Horace was one big smile; everybody else was looking nice things at him. But I honestly think that what Archie liked best of all, was the look on little Mildred's face. The lass didn't cheer, or wave her handkerchief, but she simply *looked.* But such a look! Boy as he was and man as he now is, he never forgot the happy, prideful expression on the dear little maiden's countenance!

Archie only came back to earth when Harper, his face lit up with satisfaction, tapped him on the shoulder.

"Hartley," said he, "for the second time today, I want to say all sorts of nice things to you, but there isn't time now. The cohorts are descending on you, and the committee will have to see you safe to the dressing-room, if Donchester intends to keep you alive to take the stiffening out of Ameswood."

It was true. The whole school seemed to be making for Archie as one man or rather boy, and the athletic committee was bracing itself

in order to meet the apparently inevitable scrimmage. Dr. Pardee, however, took in the situation, and saved it. Turning to his secretary he nodded. Whereupon the secretary drew forth a silver whistle and blew three sharp blasts on it. It was the Doctor's personal signal for the Donchesterians to come to order and attention and it was instantly obeyed. The flood of humanity was stayed and Dr. Pardee looked at Harper inquiringly.

"Thank you, sir," said the latter, touching his cap. "May we move, sir?"

"Those whom you designate may. No others."

Again the fingers of the track captain were raised to his forehead and turning, he beckoned to the hurdlers and the athletic committee. And these marched quietly through the silent ranks of the others to the gymnasium quarters. Donchester discipline had once more splendidly vindicated itself!

CHAPTER XXVII

Uncle Horace did not go home that night as he had originally intended but, yielding to the wishes of his hosts and Harper and Archie, promised to remain over for the awarding of the prizes that was to take place on the Monday following. According to Donchester rule, that day was an entire holiday, you remember.

I wish I had time and space to tell you of the sheer joy that the Sabbath and the prize-day brought to Archie and the fellows in general. But I haven't, and so I must dismiss the matter by saying that the memory of the happy forty-eight hours will remain with Archie all his life, inspiring him when he feels a trifle down in the dumps; and comforting him when he needs condolence. You get both inspiration and comfort from a knowledge of the fact that people believe in you and your possibilities. So it was that the cheering of his schoolmates, the kindly words of Dr. Pardee, the smiles of Mildred, and the encouraging talk of his uncle made Archie feel that he *must* continue to deserve these things in the first place, and that

he *must* have something in him that entitled him to them, in the second. And the silver clasp that Dr. Pardee pinned on his breast was a tangible proof of the latter, so Archie decided.

Well, the fun came to an end at length and the school once more settled down to study and play of the usual order. The Interscholastic Meet at Boston was set for the final week in February; and those of the Donchester athletes who were to compete in it, were therefore allowed to go out of strict training for a few days. Nevertheless, Travers warned them not to yield too freely to the schoolboy's chief temptation, which is his appetite, but to remember that just as much as they fed themselves up on rich and indigestible "eats," so much the more would they have to work to get back into condition.

The bulk of the youngsters faithfully followed the trainer's advice, Archie and his close chums among these. But a few others either thought that they knew better than Travers or were too obstinate to heed his advice. Now when you break training you know you are very apt to feel a craving for foods that are reverse of wholesome although they may be tasty. Why this is, I confess I don't know, unless it is the dietetic waywardness that is in most of us. The use of a little will power, though, will almost al-

ways prevent one from giving way to these harmful cravings.

Anyhow, Travers caught on to the fact that his wishes were being ignored by the minority in question, with the result that one afternoon he had all his charges marshaled in the gym and gave them a vigorous heart to heart talk on the evils of gluttony. I say *all* his charges, and this was even so, for he didn't want to humiliate the offenders too much by talking at them directly. Instead, he addressed himself to the athletes in general, but these knew well enough for whose benefit the lecture was being given.

As a rule, Travers was one of the most kindly and even-tempered of men. The only thing that jolted his patience off the track and made it bump over the ties of anger, was neglect or carelessness on the part of his protégés that threatened the athletic repute of Donchester. Then it was that the lads learned that the veteran had a caustic tongue and a flow of acid language, both of which he used unsparingly when the occasion arose. That afternoon harangue was one of such occasions, and the delinquents wilted as they listened! He spoke of the boy who valued his stomach far more than the reputation of the school; who was willing to barter the trust that his captain and his com-

panions had reposed in him for the sake of a gorge of pie or candy. He compared such a boy to a thief who was stealing his enjoyment at the expense of others; to a Judas Iscariot who was selling Donchester for a brief personal gratification. He declared that the glutton was untrue to the promises to himself and his promise made to the athletic committee, and therefore had no regard for the truth or his personal honor. And much more. By the time he was through, the culprits felt about the size of red ants, and the same color of those insects by reason of their blushes of shame. But towards the end of his discourse, Travers, changing his keynote, said that he felt that after all, the drummy youngsters had sinned more through thoughtlessness than aught else, and he hoped that what he had said to them would spur their memories if the latter showed signs of getting lazy. After this, there were no more late-o'-night "pie-scoffs"; no surreptitious candy gorges, no indulging between meals in cake-and-cream "busts." All with the consequence that when the time came for the affray in Boston, the Donchesterians who took part in it were very fit indeed. Which accounted for—but we'll not anticipate.

"Youth with the feathered feet," said Parrot to Archie about a week after the inter-class

meet, "the muse within me has nibbled the points off a score of pencils in her endeavor to do justice to thy deeds of derring-do in shape of lofty verse. But although she's got black-lead indigestion in consequence, she hasn't worried out the first couplet."

"Blessed be she for that!" replied our hero.

"Ingrate! That remark of yours shows that what I am about to offer you in place of the fragrant rhyme that didn't frag will be much more appropriate to one so grossly woven."

"Say, Parrot, why can't you talk plain United States like the rest of us?" asked Archie. "Honest, it gives me a headache trying to fish your meaning out of the tangle of words that you use."

"My boy," explained the other solemnly, "great minds can hardly be expected to juggle the selfsame sentences as—ah—less gifted individuals. We who walk the heights, think in a different atmosphere; talk in a higher key than do those who grovel in the lower levels."

"That explains why you were 'crumpled' at mathematics yesterday, I suppose? Couldn't stoop down to 'em, eh?" asked Archie mischievously.

"Crumpled" was the school term for being set back.

Parrot looked at him admiringly. "It is

really astonishing how one so young and so unversed in the—the higher range of thought, can comprehend US so readily. You have explained the situation exactly, Archie. Unluckily, Professor Smithson couldn't grasp the matter in the manner that you have, and so, I was crumpled." He sighed.

Archie laughed. "Never mind, old chap. And now, wouldn't you just as soon tell me what you started out to tell?"

"Bless my blacking pot! I'd almost forgotten all about it. It's this. I want you and the rest of the Vigilantes to come to Aunt Sally's to-night, there to celebrate, as my guests, your smashing of the forty-yard dash record!"

Archie looked his thanks as well as his embarrassment at the same time. "It's jolly good of you, Parrot," he said, "but—but, well you know that I don't care to be fussed over."

"But you can't help it, my che-ild," declared Parrot. "When you've made good, you must expect to be petted and praised and patted and purred over and other things beginning with a 'P.' I'm just breaking you in for what's coming to you in the advancing years."

Many's the true word spoken in jest, says the proverb. Parrot little knew that his prophecy would be fully vindicated.

"But can't you—we—have the eats without the 'P's' in this case?" urged Archie with a sort of wistful whimsicality.

Parrot burst into a fit of hearty laughter. "You're a queer kid," he said when he could talk again. "Most fellows like to play catcher to the bouquets that come their way. You look as if you'd sooner take salts than put the mask on. Tell you what I'll do. When the time comes to massage your recent feat with the soft hand of velvet language, I'll get on my hind feet and address the assemblage thus: 'Gentlemen, at the request of the Hon. Archibald Hartley, you will avoid all allusion to his nimble legs; to the way in which he has kicked over the record with those same members and to the manner that he proposes using them to the shame and harm of Ameswood. I have therefore to ask you to drink the health of those lovely limbs in coffee and in silence.' How will that do?"

"It won't do at all and you know it. Well, I'll come and thank you very much, but you'll cut out as much of confectionery as you can, won't you?"

"On my head be it. Bismillah! I have spoken." Parrot made Archie an Oriental salaam and departed.

CHAPTER XXVIII

And so, the Vigilantes gathered that night at Aunt Sally's in the private room upstairs set aside for them. And the Spud was there as a specially invited guest; likewise the Cherub. And the eyes of the former seemed to grow larger and larger as the evening proceeded until, as Mackay put it, there was hardly room in his face for his mouth. The little chap had lived a very narrow sort of life in Ireland, you know, consorting with but few boys of his own age, and they having fathers of limited means, as is the way of most folk in the land of the Green Sod. So it was that the American schoolboy was a revelation and a joy to him, on the score of the intelligence, wit, and vast good-nature of the former. I don't want to appear as if I were waving our flag unnecessarily, but it's a fact that the American people are the most generous of all races, and the younger generation is like the older in this respect.

Aunt Sally had exerted herself for the feast, and had done nobly. As Curtis remarked after the meal, "She's sure black as to skin, but she's

clear white when it comes to cooking." Also was the feed prepared with special attention to the fact that some of the feasters were still on the edge of training, so that while it was most appetizing, there wasn't a single dish served to which Travers would have taken exception. Parrot had insisted on that much when he had presented a "trial menu" to Sally. Eccentric genius as he was, Parrot had a keen sense of school honor that affected his smallest actions, and the dietetic make-up of the meal was but a single proof thereof.

I'll only hint at the chief dishes with which Auntie and her daughters appeased the hunger of the lads. There was chicken, of course, browned in the pan; served *à la Maryland,* or fricasseed with fragrant peppers brought from the South. There was real Virginia ham, that melted in your mouth and was the color of old mahogany, and there was—I wonder if you can guess.

No? Well, real canvasback ducks, broiled in Tennessee style with candied sweet potatoes! Aunt Sally had had a pair sent to her by relatives in the South a day or so before for her own use. But when Parrot told her that the dinner was in honor of Archie, she forthwith volunteered the "attendance" of the ducks.

"Dat young gen'leman is one uv de nicerest

uv all wha' come yer," said she, "not dat dey isn't all uv de quality sort, sah. If dey wa'n't, I wouldn't want 'em roun'. I'se no use faw pooah white trash, I hasn't! But dish yer Mistah Archie, he act laike gen'leman all de time. Don't neber try get fraish wid Aunt Sally, no sah, neber! Jus' treat me laike I am, a black laidy fr'm Tennessee. 'Cept youahself, sah, dere's not a white pusson 'round dese yere parts dat I'd share mah ducks wiv, 'cept Mistah Archie."

Aunt Sally hadn't been to Ireland, but she could blarney as thoroughly as if she had kissed the stone that is said to butter the tongue.

Then, too, there was roly-poly jam pudding and rice pudding and deep apple-pie, the recipe of which had descended to Sally from Colonial days and some more wholesome kinds of goodies. Oh, yes. A big feed undoubtedly, but when you consider that about sixteen Donchesterians, growing boys at that, were to tackle it, it will be seen that it wasn't a bit too much.

Well, it came to an end at last, and with vast sighs of content, the youngsters watched the colored ladies clear away the débris of the feast.

"Parrot," said Mackay when the boys were alone, "I always thought a lot of you in spite of the way that you run to jaw, but after to-

night, I positively adore you. Oh, those ducks! After we've knocked Ameswood galley-west, I'll go on a duck diet for a month or more."

"Pig," muttered Archie with a grin.

"Hypocrite," responded Mackay; "you had two helpings yourself."

"If the gentleman who worships his stomach and the gentleman who is to give Ameswood a pain under its pinafore will kindly stop calling each other pet names," said Parrot amid a roar of laughter, "the Apollos of this gathering will open the evening's exercises with a song of the sprint. Modesty forbids me to name the author of this beautiful lyric."

He rapped the table with the handle of a knife, whereupon a half-dozen of the boys broke into the following, the air being a lively one:

"We care not for the laurel wreath that crowns the poet's brow;
We covet not the crowd's applause that greets the orator,
We envy not the scientist though we his fame allow;
And legislative honors, we've no ambition for.

"On War's dread fields let others ride and smite with mighty dint!
When cannons roar and rifles crack amid the red steel's glint!

For us, for us, the cinder path; the feet that speeding flash!
The while our muscles strain themselves to win the forty-dash!"

CHORUS (in which all joined at the top of their lungs):

"The Sprint! The Sprint! Yo ho! the dashing Sprint!
The pistol cracks! We're off; we're off! We overtake the wind!
And Archie Hartley leads, my lads! Hurrah for Donchester!
The race is ours for Archie wins with Ameswood yards behind!"

And so on for a half-dozen verses or so, during which Archie's face suggested that he was sitting on hot bricks and didn't like to say so.

At the end of the song, Mackay struck the table three times with the haft of his knife. Whereupon, Archie was given the "butt salute," which was performed by spelling his name, letter by letter, following each with a sharp rap on the table with the knife butt.

"Mac," whispered our hero reproachfully, as the salute ended, "this is a put up job. Why didn't you tip me off?"

" 'Cause you wouldn't have come here if I had," replied the other coolly. "Modesty is

your affliction, Archie, and I'm trying to cure you of it!"

"So it's *you* who has sprung this surprise-party on me, is it?"

"Not altogether, sonny. Parrot is putting up the price of the feeds. I'm piling my massive intellect on the oratorical end of the menu. He promised you, didn't he, that he wouldn't start 'em talking?"

"He did."

"Well, he'll keep his word. As I've just said, I'm the party who is handling the talk-throttle. Watch me!"

Before Archie could say a remonstrating word, Mackay rose and spoke thus: "Fellow fellows: The good-nature of Parrot and the cooking of Aunt Sally have been team-mates on this occasion and we've had a bully good dinner in consequence—one of the goodest that, I think, we've ever eaten in this—this—um—"

"Gorge-emporium," suggested a boy named Venables.

"Tidbit-teepee," prompted Curtis.

"Haven of the Hungry!" This from Parrot.

"Thank you," said Mackay gravely bowing to Parrot. "In this Haven of the Hungry. At the moment, my feelings reflect the—the senti-

ment of—of that beautiful verse of the poet which runs:

> "Good grub produces—ain't it rummy?
> A holy calm within the tummy!"

(Applause) "And I am pretty positive that you are—that you agree with the—ah—the bard (much applause). But while our thanks are due to the white gent and the colored lady just mentioned, we feel nevertheless, that the real treat of the evening is having with us one whom—who seems—ah—destined by—by Fate to turn up the—the wick of Donchester's athletic glory while he claps the extinguisher on the —the flickering flame of Ameswood's aspirations!"

(Uproarious cheers and "Oh, extinguish yourself, Mac," from Archie.) "I need hardly say that I mean Archie Hartley!" (Hurricane of yells, shouts, whistles, stamping of feet, and smiting of tables with fists and knife-handles.) "The racket that you make rejoices the cockles of my heart for it shows that you—you properly—ah—appreciate the crackerdest—"

"I rise to a point of order," interrupted a boy named Boyd who was president of the junior debating society of the school. He looked at Parrot.

"State it," said Parrot curtly.

"Does this jamboree justify the gentleman who has just had the floor from wandering away from the dictionary? Crackerdest!"

"The gentleman who has risen to a point of order will please refrain from damming the stream of eloquence that has been gurgling from the other speaker's lips with the boulders of grammatical criticism," said Parrot severely. "Consequently, he will fold the hinges of his hind legs and the orator of the evening will proceed."

The abashed Boyd took his seat and Mackay arose again.

"As I was saying when interrupted by a party whom it would be improper to allude to as Buttinsky Boyd (laughter and applause), I am glad to see that you are wise to the value of Archie as a glory-getter for Donchester. And in the days to—to come, when—when he is the crack,"—he looked triumphantly at Boyd —"when he is the crack sprinter at Yale and after that, of all the—the—um—"

"Terrestrial ball," said Parrot in a stage whisper.

"The whole world," went on Mackay, ignoring the prompting, "we who are present tonight will shake our own hands to think that we were privileged to—to be here and—that is —to sit at the same table with him." (Tre-

mendous cheering under cover of which Archie hissingly demanded that Mackay "shut up!")

Mackay here drank thirstily of a goblet of water in true after-dinner-speaker fashion and referring to some notes, resumed.

"But while we hail him as the Wonder of the Track, we are not forgetful of—of his bully good qualities that are—are centered in his head and heart instead of his legs (prolonged applause). Archie Hartley has only just chipped his minny shell, but for all that, I believe that everybody at Donchester, from the Head to—to the Spud, looks upon him as a true Donchesterian, in every meaning of the term and I can give him no larger praise than *that* (roof-lifting cheers). I have therefore to call on you for three cheers and a tiger for Archie and his future successes!"

A half-dozen steam calliopes on a spree could hardly have made more row than did the cheers, while as for the "tiger" it was simply hair-raising! And amid it all, the recipient of the noisy acclamation sat flushing and frowning and smiling, all at the same time.

"Get up and say something," whispered Mackay as the cheers gradually came to an end.

"I don't want to, and I can't," replied Archie, in an agonized tone.

"Say, old man, but you must make a try at

it," remonstrated his chum; "the fellows will think you haven't good manners if you don't squeeze out a word or two of thanks."

That settled it. Archie's home training wasn't exactly of a kind that had taught him that "being vulgar was being worse than wicked" but it had impressed upon him the fact that bad manners were not very far removed from the coarse form of sin. And Archie, like all wholesome-minded boys, hated coarseness. So blushing and trembling and feeling as if cold lightning were running up and down his spine, he rose, and as he did so, the crowd roared its delight and regard for him so thunderously, that his mind became a blank and the room spun around him and the lights danced drunkenly. "Say you're much obliged for their expressions of kindness," muttered Mackay who was watching him closely.

Archie obeyed and after the first half-dozen words had escaped from his lips, he felt, much to his astonishment, that his self-control was coming back to him and that his voice that had gone off a mile or so, was returning home once more. So he made quite a neat little speech of it and sat down so full of wonderment at himself, that he hardly noticed the salvos of applause that were fired at him.

Mackay grinned hugely. "You little hum-

bug," he said under his breath, "really couldn't speechify, eh? And then you get up and gabble like a politician at primary time. I'll bet a chocolate éclair that you've another uncle who's a congressman or a book-agent and that he's been giving you lessons in tongue calisthenics."

"Haven't," replied Archie with a touch of indignation. "But I've got one, who is a doctor and a specialist. And I'd like to send you to him."

"Why?"

"He treats those who suffer from loss of appetite," chuckled Archie.

"Parrot," said Archie as the boys were making preparations to leave Aunt Sally's for their dormitories, "I'm awfully obliged to you for the dinner. I'm going to write to Dad and tell him just how kind you have been."

"My young friend, if you ever open your head about the feed to me again, or to any one else in the immediate present or far future, I'll—I'll—"

"What?" laughed Archie.

"I'll give a stuffing-fest to Blobs and O'Brien when they come back to school next fall!"

"I'm mum," cried our hero.

CHAPTER XXIX

The weather of the next two weeks was glorious. Heavy rains that cleared away the snow just as the latter was beginning to get soiled and speckly, were succeeded by a series of sharp frosts—not the black and biting kind that shrivels you up and roughens your skin and bites into your bones, but the crisp, cheery, exhilarating frost that sends the blood thrilling through your veins, and makes you feel as if you were sprouting wings, and causes you to get up and do things and run and shout with the sheer joy of being alive.

There were great times at Donchester in consequence and the Broad was the scene of the majority thereof. Skating was there; ice hockey; skate-racing; "curling" by members of the faculty and friends; figure skating by those who knew how, and on one occasion, a torch-light carnival, as it was called, although it was simply a turnout of the boys who skated to the music of the town-band, while bearing blazing pine-knots.

In all of this fun Archie took an active part,

especially on those afternoons and nights when the Ridgeleys were in evidence. Professor Ah skated with all the seriousness that became a faculty member; Mildred flew around on her steels like a winter humming-bird if there is such a little creature, which is doubtful. Mrs. Ridgeley sat on the bank and smiled. And Archie, when he could summon up courage to defy the "clinking" of the fellows, would ask Mildred's permission to skate with her and 'round the Broad the pair would go, sometimes using the "promenade" skate-step and at other times the double-roll, and so forth. Then it was that our hero would almost decide that skating was pretty nearly as much fun as sprinting; indeed I am not at all sure that on more than one occasion he didn't come to the conclusion that skating had a shade the better of it, provided, of course, that one had the little maiden as skating partner. If you had seen her after one of these spins around the frozen lake with her cheeks the color of wild-roses, her lips a vivid scarlet, and her eyes bluer and more sparkling than ever, you wouldn't have blamed Archie for his temporary treason to the cinder path, I'm sure.

Travers had requested Archie not to play ice-hockey for fear of an accident, and the latter obeyed. But it was mighty hard to stand by

and see the puck spin along the smooth surface with the players in pursuit, and to witness the scrimmages and clever bits of play and the meeting, massing and driving, and yet not take part in it all. The trainer also suggested that Archie keep out of the games that were productive of sprains and wrenches and sometimes broken bones, such as cross-tag, blindman's-buff on skates, snapping-the-whip, with the help of the ringing steels, and so on. And again Archie honored Travers's wishes, at the expense of his own. Yet, all the same, he managed to have a most enjoyable time of it.

Then, too, and by permission of the Head, parties of the boys were allowed to go off on "bacon bats," which, as I have already explained in my first book, were a sort of impromptu picnic at which a fire was built and slices of bacon were toasted and sandwiched and devoured and, if the conveniences served, coffee was also made and swallowed by the cupful. Some of these "bats" took place during the day but more at night. This last was for the reason that every normal boy has a touch of romance in him. The day "bat" was all right, of course, but the night "bat" held in the depths of the skeleton woods with the boughs and branches snapping weirdly with the cold, and the drifting night-clouds or moonlight laced

with tree-tracery, overhead, and the tree-trunks and snow made ruddy by the blazing fire—ah! that was the sort of thing that appealed to the romance of the boys' nature! So, huddled around the cheery warmth, the boys would tell stories that had a bearing on their surroundings—Curtis of nights spent on Kansas prairies; the Spud of banshees and The Good People or fairies; Parrot, whose brain was stocked with all sorts of out-of-the-way information, of the Indian legends that circled Donchester in general and the Broad in particular; Mackay and Curtis and Evans of adventures that had happened to relatives of theirs, and even the Cherub came to the fore with tales of campers who had gotten lost, or of natives of his State who had been attacked by wolves in severe winters. Delightfully creepy it was to glance over your shoulder and scan the dim vistas of the naked trees to make sure that Woo-Ka-Sen-Wah-Woo, the ghost moose, wasn't in sight; or that the howl of the distant farm-dog, wasn't the gathering-cry of the leader of the wolf pack!

Also was there the tracking of rabbits in the fresh snow, and the deciphering of "spoor" of birds and beasts, in which Archie proved himself an expert, having been taught the art by his father. And the boy also took a host of

photographs of this "spoor" and other pictures of the winter time, including a running rabbit, of which he was justly proud.

This outdoor fun wasn't free from small adventures. Thus, on one occasion, one of the rocks from which Archie and his chums had built a fireplace, exploded with the heat, sending the coffee-pot flying and demolishing the lines of bacon that fringed the fire. No damage was done to anybody, externally, but the boys suffered internally, having no reserve provision with which to allay the pangs of hunger.

On another occasion, Archie and Mackay were having a "bat" all to themselves and for this purpose had made camp in a little valley in Pinney's, which was the name of the biggest wood that adjoined the Broad. They had a good fire going, the coffee was in the act of boiling and some crumpets, that Aunt Sally had made for them after a recipe furnished by Mackay, were toasting gloriously when, Zump! fire, coffee-pot and crumpets, suddenly disappeared, leaving a black hole in their place.

Investigation showed that they had built the fire over a small pond that, lightly frozen over in the first instance, had gotten upon itself a garment of snow and fallen twigs that gave it a semblance of solid if snow-covered earth.

The heat of the blaze had gradually melted the ice until it had given way all of a sudden with the results as told! Neither pot nor crumpets could be recovered.

To the other delights of that winter, only a reference need be made. Thus, on the campus, each class had its own slide and tried to outdo all the other classes in distance. I'm afraid to tell you of the yards that some of these slides covered lest you should think that I was "ballooning." Even the fifth-class "men" joined in the fun and there are legends that some of the faculty were unable to resist the temptation that the long, glassy streaks offered.

Then, too, there were more snowfights—without stone-cores—and the making of snow-men and snow-birds and snow-houses and snow-forts. It was during one Donchester winter, that the remarkably clever molding of a group of snow-geese by one of the boys, drew the attention of Dr. Pardee to him. On investigation, he discovered that the youngster spent most of his leisure time in carving all sorts of little figures with his pocket knife—cows, sheep, birds, flowers, boys, and what not. The result was that the Head wrote to the lad's father urging the latter to let his son have an art education. So, after he left Donchester, the youngster took an art course in New York and later

studied in Europe. To-day, he has an established reputation as sculptor and specimens of his work are to be found in the art galleries in this country and abroad—all through the snow-geese! The moral is that if a boy has a decided talent for a vocation or profession, he ought to be allowed to follow the promptings of that talent, whenever possible. It may be added that the snow-geese incident took place before the coming of Archie to Donchester, but remained one of the many carefully treasured traditions of the school. Dr. Pardee was a great believer in the educational value of fine inspirational tradition, the kind that made boys promise themselves that they, too, will do things that will cause their names to be remembered by the boys who come after them, either in school or elsewhere.

Also and by reason of the Donchesterians being a hardy lot, football flourished in spite of the inclement weather. In this connection it will be proper to remark that the Cherub covered himself with glory by fully vindicating the hopes of Stanley, the team captain. Possessed as he was of weight, a fair knowledge of the game, and unfailing good-temper, Chipp played such a consistently good game in a variety of positions, that at the end of the first season, he was promoted to the reserve of the

senior team, that, too, in spite of his youth. And between you and me, the juniors were not a bit sorry when he was thus promoted. Football is a jolly sort of game unless the other side has a right-tackle that resembles a combination of behemoth and Samson. It was such, that the Cherub seemed to be to those who had to line up against him.

But this long chapter must come to a close with a reference to the serenades that formed such a striking and jolly feature of winter life at Donchester. On a given evening, provided that the weather permitted, the president of the glee club would send a formal request to Dr. Pardee for permission to pay "melodic devoirs"—that was the phrase always used—to the faculty. The permission being given, the entire school would assemble around the faculty quarters at say, eight P. M. where, under the guidance of the glee club, it would join in the choruses, of which the organization sang the verses. Copies of such choruses were distributed to the students a couple of days previous to the serenade, so that there was no hitch in this part of the proceedings. Some of the songs had belonged to the school for generations; others were written and composed by the musical geniuses in the club, and there was always one song that had to do with school topics

of the moment. The first serenade of the winter, therefore, included in its topical song, flattering allusions to Archie and prophecies of what would befall Ameswood when he got after that educational establishment on the track. One of the verses that dealt with our hero went something like this:

"Our Archie's going to Boston to swing his little axe,
And presently you'll hear a sound of Chop! Chop! Chop!
He's hacking at the Ameswood growth that cumbers up the tracks,
Oh! watch the trees of Ameswood as they Drop! Drop! Drop!
Yes, his little axe is swinging and the Ameswood records fall!
And doesn't he do the hewing trick right smartly?
Crash! crash!—there goes the Ameswood pride that grew so straight and tall!
Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah! for Archie Hartley!"

And didn't the crowd cheer after the club had sung this verse!

"The sentiment is all right," said Parrot as he cocked his head to one side and listened critically to the words, "but the lines won't scan. Professor Ah ought to have a search warrant out for the perpetrator of this—this offense against the laws of metre."

He addressed the other members of the quin-

tet who, as per usual were flocking together at a point of vantage near the faculty quarters.

"Yes," growled Archie, "and for making such a fool of himself and—me! It would serve some of 'em right if I let the Ameswood fellows beat me. Why can't they leave me alone?"

This goes to show that Archie Hartley didn't altogether appreciate being drawn into the fierce white light that beats upon the incipient champion.

CHAPTER XXX

One morning, Archie found in the mail box a brief note from Harper to the effect that the latter would be glad to see him in the gym after the close of recitations. On reaching the place of appointment, our hero found not only the track captain but Travers also. The former plunged into an explanation right away:

"You probably know, Archie," he said, "that we have taken the dust of Ameswood for a couple of years in succession?"

Archie said, "Yes, sir," and Travers smiled and nodded as if to intimate that the end of Donchester's rival was in sight.

"Well," went on Harper, "the reason of this is plain enough. Two years ago, we were badly off for athletic material, while Ameswood had lots of it and to spare. Last year, an Ameswood boy named Sheahan who had given much athletic promise the year before, developed wonderfully under the care of Jim Clarke, the Ameswood trainer."

"And none better than Jim," interrupted Travers.

"Except the Donchester trainer," said Harper with a smile.

"Thankee, sir," from Travers.

"Sheahan was particularly good at the dashes and it was through his work that we were beaten by a narrow margin, so narrow indeed, that if we had had a runner who was as good as he, we, instead of Ameswood, would be holding the Interscholastic trophy."

"And that's right," confirmed Travers.

"Some weeks ago—before our inter-class meet—we heard that he was to take part in the low-hurdles race at the Interscholastic, and that was the reason why we were so anxious to try you out at the hurdles at our own meet. We have now received information that he will *not* tackle the hurdles again, but instead, will be an entry in the relay race in which Ameswood is pitted against Donchester."

"Yes, sir," said Archie again, wondering meanwhile what the captain was leading up to.

"I have reason to believe that it was the news that you did so well at the hurdles that caused this change of plans on the part of the Ameswood athletic committee," went on Harper. "I wouldn't tell you this, Archie, if I didn't know that you don't suffer from 'hydro.' "

Archie looked his thanks and the captain proceeded:

"I am, therefore, going to anticipate the Ameswood plans by entering you for the relay at the Interscholastic Meet instead of the hurdles as I had first intended. With you will be Brown, Creasey, and O'Malley. Evans will be my hope for the hurdles. I needn't say that you will also, run in and as I believe, be a winner, in the dashes—"

"That's positive," beamed Travers.

"Don't you mind what Travers says," laughed Harper. "You'll run as if you were afraid of being beaten, Archie."

"Yes, sir. That's what uncle says."

"Then you know that it's right."

"How old is Sheahan and is he a big boy, sir?" asked Archie.

"He's nearly eighteen and he's big—quite big." Harper watched our hero's face closely as he spoke. But if he had expected to see signs of apprehension thereon, he was disappointed. Archie's face was as calmly pleasant as usual.

"Then, sir," said Archie without a trace of braggadocio, "if he's that old and that big, there'll be all the more fun in licking him." And the little chap's features lit up with amusement and anticipation.

Harper burst into a roar of laughter as did Travers. "You're right; you're quite right.

And I'm awfully glad that you feel that way about it. Confidence is half the battle in a sprint, or for that matter, in anything else."

"That's what uncle says," said Archie once more.

"Then I'm glad that I think the same way that he does."

"If you don't mind telling me, sir," began Archie with some hesitation, "what is Mackay to do at the Interscholastic?"

"Same as before. Distance running."

"Oh!" Archie sighed relievedly.

"Why?"

"Nothing, sir, only he'd have felt awfully cut if he hadn't been entered."

"In a couple of days or so, we'll have to start training again. I won't ask you to work then as faithfully as you have done heretofore, because I know that you will without prompting. Good-bye."

He held out his hand and Archie took it. The young man and the boy looked each other in the eyes, and each saw therein, that that yielded confidence and regard; these being destined in later years, to blossom into the sincerest of friendships.

"Fine little fellow," said the captain to the trainer after our hero had left the gymnasium.

"He is *that*," said Travers emphatically.

"He's the makings of a man as well as a champion in him."

Harper nodded. "The two ought always to go together," he said and then he fell to discussing athletic matters.

Before he went to bed that night, Archie wrote a long letter to Uncle Horace in which he told of the conversation that he had had with Harper. "I don't like to ask you for more advice, Uncle," he went on, "but I would be more than obliged if you could give me some points on relay-racing. I suppose that like most athletics, such racing has wrinkles all its own. I'm very keen on making good at the Interscholastic and that's the reason why I'm troubling you once more. You don't mind, do you? Will you please let me hear from you as soon as you can, for we start in training very soon."

Uncle Horace replied promptly. And what he had to say about relay running was to the effect that one and perhaps the chief secret of winning a race of that kind was to be found in the way that each party to it, took up the running. As you all know, in a relay race, the starting competitor runs a certain distance and then "touches" a second competitor who takes up the running until he too has gone the required distance when he, in turn, touches a

third companion, and so on until the entire race is run. Now, as Uncle Horace said, quick "touching" is an essential of victory, for if the competitors are deficient in this element, they lose so much time that they are sure to be defeated. In order to insure against loss of time, therefore, it is necessary for the one who is about to be touched, to be running at the moment that his companion who is to do the touching reaches the spot from which No. 2 is to start. This calls for care and practice, lest No. 2 overrun the starting point, or hasn't reached his full speed when he is touched.

Archie took the advice to heart and before the day set for the beginning of both training and practice had a long talk with his teammates about the matter, during which he read the Yale man's letter, the others being much impressed by its contents. And when Archie folded up the missive, O'Malley drew a deep breath and looked on the others.

"We'll have to show him, fellows," he said.

"Yes, it's up to us to prove to Archie's uncle that we were worth the pen and paper that he's used up in sending us advice."

"He'll be shown," said Brown, who was a youth of much determination and few words.

"Write him that we've won already, thanks to his chumminess," suggested Creasey.

"I'll write him that the bunch *will* win," said Archie quietly.

"And it *will*," chorused the trio.

CHAPTER XXXI

I don't think that in the history of Donchester athletics, there was more earnest and faithful training than in this instance. Every boy worked as if the success of the school at the forthcoming meeting was dependent on his individual efforts. The result was that as the time drew near for the fateful event that was to determine the athletic supremacy of the rival schools, the smile of satisfaction on Travers's face deepened.

"We have a crowd of schoolboy world-beaters, Mr. Harper," he said; "they could go anywhere and do anything, taking ages and weight into consideration. I have never passed out such a handful before!"

"I hope you are right," replied Harper gravely. "But we're not pinning on the medals as yet." Somehow or other, the strain of the responsibility of his position, was getting on the captain's nerves a trifle and he had occasional fits of depression.

"But we will, sir, we will! If we don't, I don't know anything about the business."

"Goodness knows that I hope you are right. Are you fully satisfied with the relay entries by the way?"

"Quite. They are working together like oiled machinery. Creasey tells me that Hartley has been privately coaching the boys in 'touching' and how to run corners. 'Twould be wasting breath to say that he's a natural born athlete, both as to theory and practice."

Harper nodded and his face lightened. "Yes, that's true. I almost wish that this wasn't my last year here, for I'd love to see the dear lad develop athletically, as I know he will. But if we can put it over Ameswood, thanks to him, I'll at least have the satisfaction of knowing that he was one of my—of our—lads."

"Well," said the veteran confidently, "you'll sure have that satisfaction, Mr. Harper, barring accidents and the act of God."

CHAPTER XXXII

As long as the salt of athleticism keeps sweet the personal and national life of a people, so long will that life make for mental and material prosperity. The inhabitants of New England are illustrations of the truth just set forth. Within the "Yankee States" sport—using the term in its best sense—flourishes, as do commerce and learning; civic pride and patriotism. And if time permitted, it could be shown that the relation between the tracks and the field on the one hand, and the factories and the libraries and colleges of this section of our country on the other, is very real and close indeed!

The annual Interscholastic Athlete Meeting of New England High and Preparatory Schools —to give the affair its full title—is but one, yet a striking proof of this athletic trend on the part of the younger generation. When it is stated that between thirty and forty leading schools take part in the various events, and that the competing athletes number several hundred, some idea of the importance of the meeting, athletically considered, will be obtained, to say

nothing of its other and far-reaching aspects and possibilities.

Among the preparatory schools that every year were represented at the meeting, none were keener rivals than Donchester and Ameswood. So far, they had been playing a game of seesaw with each other, one being on top for one or two years, only to fall on the year following. At the moment, Ameswood had been leading for a couple of meets in succession, mainly through the work of Sheahan, who, like Archie, was said to be possessed of natural "form." Sheahan had beaten all comers at the dashes and 300-yard runs, and at the meeting that preceded the coming of Archie to Donchester he had won for Ameswood the great relay race. You will therefore understand the hopes and expectation that Donchester in general and Harper and Travers in particular centered around Archie.

Mechanics Hall, Boston, in which the meet takes place is probably known to a good many of you. But for the benefit of those who are not familiar with it, a brief description of this noted structure and its athletic facilities may be in order.

In the first place, then, it is one of the largest buildings in the Hub, if not the largest, so that it is always chosen for a show of any kind

whatever that calls for space and plenty of it. It will probably seat 4,000 persons.

The hall used for the Interscholastic Meet, has a circular track of thirteen laps to the mile or, to put it another way, one lap is one hundred and thirty yards. The track is of hard maple.

The starts for the sprints and short-distance hurdle races are made from the right-hand corner of the floor, calculating from the point at which the spectators enter. The competitors run diagonally across the floor, thus obtaining an ample straightaway.

All around the track stands are built, one of which is assigned to every school whose athletes are among the competitors. Close by the start and finish points of the team or relay races, raised stages with seats are built, these being set aside for the schools that finished first and second during the year preceding. The front seats of these stands are given over to the faculties of the two leading schools and to the specially invited guests of the occasion. It need not be added in view of what has already been said, that Donchester and Ameswood had occupied these stages for two years running.

Right in the middle of the hall, also are seats for the chief officials of the meet, and a table

on which are piled the trophies to be awarded to the victorious athletes.

Lastly, there are two big balconies to accommodate outside spectators. Imagine therefore the huge hall crowded with enthusiastic youngsters; scarcely less enthusiastic principals and instructors and their friends, gorgeous with school flags, melodious by reason of the band, and you will get some idea of how Mechanics Hall looks and sounds on the occasion of the Interscholastic Athlete Meeting.

CHAPTER XXXIII

The day that was to mean so much to both Archie and Donchester at length arrived—it was a Saturday afternoon and therefore there were no recitations. After breakfast, our hero and the other athletic representatives of the school betook themselves to the gymnasium, where under Travers's watchful eye they lolled and strolled and chatted for an hour or so. Next came light gymnasium exercises for half an hour, followed by seasonable advice from the old man. Travers varied this with slices of taffy, knowing that boy nature responds thereto, and dismissed his charges with an injunction to save every atom of their energy for the afternoon.

"I wish—I'm not ordering, mind you," said Harper after the trainer had finished, "that you'd all go to your rooms until it's time to start for Boston. To-morrow, you can have all the fun you like on the campus, but this afternoon, well, you know that we must thrash Ameswood and we don't want to take the slightest chances about doing so. Do we?"

A ringing "No, sir," came in reply.

"Good. Then I put you on your honor not to do anything that will make you less fit for this afternoon's work."

And to their credit be it said, every lad without exception sped to his "cosey," as they call their rooms at Donchester, and refused to be drawn thence by the coaxing or entreaties of their non-competing chums. The self-denial taught by athletes once more vindicated itself.

"Well, what are the prospects, Travers?" said Harper as the boys trooped across the campus.

The wrinkled face of the veteran trainer became more wrinkled as he smiled.

"I honestly think, Mr. Harper, that they are as likely a bunch as have passed through my hands since I came to Donchester. That is, averaging them. When we come to those that are above the average—"

"Meaning Hartley, of course?"

"Meaning Hartley in particular, but not excluding Evans and Mackay."

"Yes." The track captain's tone was one of confirmation.

"Well, I'm not a betting man, but I'd wager a spring outfit against a soiled sweater that we'll come back from Boston loaded down with trophies and Ameswood chained to the axles of our chariots."

Harper's eyes twinkled. "You've found time to read the classics between licking youngsters into athletic form, I see! Well, I'm more than glad that you feel that way. I'm ditto. If Hartley can only beat Sheahan—"

"'If he can beat Sheahan?'" interrupted Travers. "'If?' Mr. Harper, if you'll excuse my saying so, I'm just a little surprised at you. Why, sir, there's nothing living with two legs, except maybe an ostrich, that can take first place from that boy."

"Perhaps not. But Sheahan is older than he is, and has much improved since last year, so I hear," said Harper slowly.

Travers smiled a smile of supreme confidence. "Don't let little things like that worry you, sir. If Sheahan could only see the forty-yard record that Hartley has hung up, he'd turn pale about the gills at the thought of what he'll be up against. And the relay is as good as ours, thanks to our wonderful little sprinter."

CHAPTER XXXIV

We will pass over the marching of the school *en masse* to the special train that was awaiting it at the Donchester depot; the way that it cheered as it marched; how the competing athletes and the faculty had a car all to themselves; and how in consequence Archie caught occasional glances of Mildred. Suffice it to say that Boston and Mechanics Hall were at length reached; that the competitors went to their dressing-rooms right away, and that Donchester and Ameswood having filled the two central stands, proceeded to cheer each other as a preliminary and joined in each other's school songs subsequently. The twain also took part in the cheering that followed the singing of other school songs. The hall was jammed to its capacity while the brilliant decorations were impressive.

On the table in the centre of the floor was the "point" trophy; a Greek athlete in the act of hurling the javelin, done in silver and wrapped in scarlet and white—the Ameswood colors. Members of the various faculties

fringed the front of the sections reserved for their schools. The big band played a selection of lively music, including many of the school ditties. And didn't the youngsters throw their heart- and lung-power into the choruses of their songs? I should say so!

The programme was a pretty long one. There were trial, semi-final, and final heats of 40 yards scratch race; relay races, 300, 600, 1000 yards and a mile and a two-mile run; the forty-five-yard low hurdles, and high hurdles, running high jump; a standing jump, and putting the sixteen-pound shot. In this last event, the Cherub was entered. Archie was down for the sprints as well as the relay race, as has been told. Mackay had been warned by Travers that he was "up against it" in the one-mile event, for one of his opponents was Sisby of Ameswood and another, Hearne of Newton Preparatory School, both being boys with enviable distance records.

"What do you think of that, Arch?" Mackay had said when the news was brought to him.

"Same as I said once before," replied our hero with characteristic coolness. "If they are better than you are, you'll lose; if you are better than they, you'll win. That's an easy one."

"There's so much truth sticking out of what you say, that I can't contradict it. But I'd

hate to trail in behind one of these chaps because—because of your uncle."

"Then don't trail behind," chuckled Archie.

And now we'll get down to the meet, but only those events will be described in which Archie figured, since space will not permit of more.

Just before the time arrived for the drawing for the forty-yard dash—this being the opening event, the attendant at the door of the dressing-room set aside for the use of the boys, came inside and shouted, "Hartley, Hartley, Archie Hartley."

"Here," replied our hero, pushing his way through the crowd of schoolmates.

"Note and package for you, *Mister* Hartley," said the man eyeing the youngster with much respect. Archie's fame on the cinder path had traveled even to Boston.

"Thanks," said Archie, wondering whom they were from. The note was brief and scribbled in pencil. It ran thus:

"Dear Archie: I've just got into Boston. Wanted to see you outrun this Ameswood boy. Have been invited to sit with the track officials on the floor. Good luck to you, Mackay, and the rest of the Donchester boys who are competing.

Uncle Horace.

"Listen, fellows," shouted Archie as he waved the letter above his head. He wasn't given to fits of excitement, but this unlooked-for and happy happening warranted a departure from his usual self-restraint. And then he read. What a cheering followed!

"We won't go back on his good-luck wish, will we?" shouted Evans.

"No-o-o-o!" came the thundering chorus.

Mackay pressed his way to Archie. "After that"—he pointed to the letter—"Donchester wins the two-mile." His eyes were sparkling and his lips had an expression of determination about them that Archie had never seen there before.

"I believe you, old chap!" Our hero held out his hand impulsively and his chum took it.

A few minutes later, and when he thought nobody was looking, Archie opened the package. In it was a dainty little pin-bow of violet and gold—the Donchester colors—and a card on which was written, "With best wishes for your success, in which mother and father join, Mildred Ridgeley."

A queer, creepy, pleasant tingle stole over the boy as he read. Then he slipped the package into the breast of his sweater and looked around. None of the fellows had observed him for which he felt thankful. Later, and

when he had donned his running togs, he carefully pinned the bow near the upper left-hand corner of the big D that adorned his breast.

"What's that?" asked Mackay whose sharp eyes had caught sight of the scrap of silk.

"That?" repeated Archie, blushing violently and trying as hard as he knew how to appear totally indifferent, either to the bow or his chum's significant smile. "Oh, that's my mascot."

Mackay looked at him quizzically. "Well, I hope that she—the mascot, of course, will bring you in a winner." And he said nothing further on the subject, for which Archie was grateful.

There were no less than forty-seven entries in the dash in which Archie was to take part. Fifteen schools were represented, Archie being the sole competitor from Donchester. This was for the reason that Harper knew that if our hero couldn't beat Sheahan, no other Donchesterian could. Archie quite understood the meaning of his "magnificent isolation," as Parrot called it, but it isn't believed that his pulses beat any the faster on that account.

In the drawing, Archie was lucky enough to be placed in the third heat; Sheahan being in the fourth. This, so Mackay declared, was a good omen.

"How goes it, Arch?" said his chum as he

glanced at the clock in the dressing-room. It was 1:25 P. M. and the events were to begin promptly at two. The committee in charge of the meet intended to live up to its traditions of punctuality.

"How goes what?" returned Archie.

"Your heart, pluck, feeling, grit—whatever you like to call it?"

"Why, same as usual. Why shouldn't it be?"

Mackay shook his head as if his minny and the latter's emotions were beyond his comprehension.

"If ever I start a cold storage plant, I wouldn't need a refrigerating machine if you'd promise to loaf around for a few hours daily," he said at length. "You've more cold-chilled nerve than any kid that I've ever met. If I were in your place, I'd be flopping around like a chicken that's been guillotined."

"What good would that do?" asked Archie as he made a final examination of the laces of his running shoes.

"Not a bit, you exasperating kid, not a bit, probably a lot of harm! But I couldn't help it, and I don't see why you should, confound you," laughed Mackay.

"Well, you see, you and I are different in some ways," explained Archie as he finished

overhauling his footgear. "For instance. I couldn't wolf a pound of coweyes right off. You can. I wouldn't funk football because a big fellow joined the team. You did. I wouldn't—"

"Tell taradiddles about my chum. You do! What's that?"

A gong sounded thrice outside the dressing-rooms, followed by the call for the contestants in the first heat of the dash.

"The first batch of victims being led to the slaughter, my youthful butcher," said Mackay.

"Or going to lose their fleeces," snickered Archie. "Seems a shame to take their pelts, doesn't it?"

Mackay looked at him severely. "I notice with surprise and regret, Archibald, that of late you are using near-slang with a freedom that is —is—"

"Owing to my flocking with one Mackay. They're off," Archie added as the bark of the pistol was followed by a mighty cheer.

A few seconds of silence and then as the cheering was renewed there came a call for the entries of the second heat.

"Slip out and see if you can get the time of the winner," said our hero to his chum.

Mackay did so to return presently with the

news that Harris of Cambridge High had done the dash in five seconds.

Archie's nose wrinkled in a smile of amusement. "Mac, that reminds me of an epitaph Dad once saw in a Nevada cemetery. It read:

" 'Here lies the remains of Bill Jones;
He did his darnedest; the angels can do no more.'

Harris has done likewise."

Mackay let out a yell of laughter. "Archie," said he, "you're developing. When you came here first you were the most solemn and jokeless of minnies. Now you positively know a joke with its hat on."

Our hero nodded his thanks and as he did so there came peals of applause that marked the end of the heat.

"My turn next," said he, as he looked himself over, gave Mildred's bow a little tug to assure himself that it was safely fastened and waited for the call.

"Hooray for Archie!" yelled somebody suddenly. And did the crowd hurrah? Well, if you'd been there, you'd have yearned for cotton batting with which to stop your ears.

Now came the call for the third-heat boys, and Archie obeyed. As he stepped out on the floor, the Donchesterians rose in their section as one, and broke into a tempest of cheers.

Archie's eye caught the flutter of a small handkerchief on the lower edge of the section, and smiled happily. Ameswood, in a generous spirit arose also and gave its noisy greeting to our hero. The other sections did likewise. It was a royal reception, and if Archie hadn't been the level-headed youngster that he was, it certainly would have made that head whirl again.

Well, the racket subsided after a time, and the young athletes were lined up for the start. Archie, of course, was on the outside lane. Then it was that Archie took a rapid survey of his antagonists. There were five of them, two only of which looked "dangerous" to him, these being on his immediate left. The others, so he concluded, were easy. Scarcely had he finished his survey when there came the command, "On your marks," followed almost instantly by, "Get set," and the pistol's crack. Archie, following his usual policy, ran as if his life depended on his winning. At the thirty-yard mark he was ahead of all the others, whereupon, he slacked down a trifle and touched the tape with his nearest rival about three-fourths of a yard behind him.

A crash of cheers followed the fluttering of the tape and the voice of the announcer shouting, "Archie J. Hartley, Donchester, wins;

Carlin, second;" was drowned therein. The Donchester section was alive with waving, whirling, and shouting boys. As he turned to walk back to the dressing-room, Archie caught sight of Professor Ah, beaming happily through his spectacles; Mrs. Ridgeley smiling in motherly fashion, and Mildred with her pretty face aglow with delight. Whereupon, Archie instinctively put his hand on the silken bow, and Mildred seeing the action, kissed her hand to him, thereby causing his heart to thump violently.

Next, he caught sight of Uncle Horace, who, from his seat of vantage on the floor, waved his hand cheerily and encouragingly. At the door of the dressing-room, Harper was awaiting him.

"Archie," said the captain, "you have done as you always do, which is splendidly. But—do you know that your time for the heat wasn't quite as good as it was at the inter-class?"

"Yes, sir. I know it," and the embryo champion looked the other in the eyes.

"You do, eh?" said Harper in a tone that told of his astonishment.

A gleam of mischief shot over Archie's face. "I'm saving myself, sir," he explained. "I didn't extend myself as much as I might because—because I want to give Sheahan a surprise. I suppose that he'll have sized me up

on the strength of this heat and he's now counting on my being an éclair—I mean, counting on beating me easily. But I don't think that he will find it so, sir."

The little clouds of anxiety on the track captain's countenance fled and confidence took their place.

"Archie," said he, "you're a diplomat as well as a sprinter. But how did you do it?"

The lad smiled roguishly. "When I overtook the last of them, I calculated just how long it would take me to reach the tape, going at full speed, and just how much speed I could afford to hold back, in consequence."

Harper laughed. "You're a lightning calculator as well as a sprinter. Well, I only hope that your calculations will work out when you meet Sheahan."

"They will, sir," replied Archie quietly.

The other heats were not especially notable as far as time was concerned. When they came to an end the one-mile run was fought out. Then came the semi-final heats of the sprint in which Archie again won "with a pull"; and then the final heat, in which Archie faced seven contestants including Sheahan.

When the boys came on the floor, Archie pending the time that the officials were trying to still the tumult that greeted their appearance,

had an opportunity of taking the measure of his rival runner as far as appearance was concerned. Sheahan was a tall, rather stockily built lad, with a stolid face, eyes set rather too closely together and an expression of "I'm-a-bit-better-than-you-are," hovering about his mouth. This expression became very marked when his eyes rested on Archie and the ghost of a smile stole over his face. As Archie had expected, his heat times had not impressed the Ameswood boy to any great extent. Indeed, Sheahan was more than confident that he would win from the "Donchester shrimp," as he called Archie when talking the matter over with his friends.

"On your marks," boomed the deep voice of the starter. Silence fell over the assemblage as the sprinters got on the line, and Archie, calling into play his powers of concentration, became oblivious to all else but what lay before him. "Get set," there was a slight shuffling and straining of muscle, and the faculties of the contestants set themselves on edge to catch the crack of the pistol. It came at last, and the lads shot away like the proverbial arrows, all in beautiful line. A roar of applause greeted the start, so perfect was it.

This time, Archie let himself out to the last link, or nearly so. Before fifteen yards were

covered, he and Sheahan had outrun the others and were speeding neck and neck. At twenty-five yards their positions were not appreciably changed, but Archie had an intuition that his rival was doing his utmost while he, himself, knew that he had still some reserve energy on which to draw. Just how this intuition, this knowledge of the condition of the other fellow comes to a sprinter, I don't know. But come it does, as any runner of experience will tell you.

At thirty yards, Archie called on this reserve and with its help, drew away from Sheahan inch by inch. I wish that you could have heard and seen the Donchester boys as he did so. They tore the atmosphere to pieces and they danced like lunatic Indians performing the Ghost Dance. The officials on the floor were on tiptoe, for they had heard of Archie's track powers and the fact that Seymour had come over from Yale to witness his nephew perform had prepared them for an exhibition out of the ordinary. As for Uncle Horace, he stood watching his protégé with a quiet and satisfied smile.

Sheahan made a gallant effort to reply to Archie's spurt, but although the will was there, the power wasn't. When the little lad from Donchester breasted the tape in 4 4-5 seconds,

the tall lad from Ameswood was three feet to the rear.

The band struck up the Donchester school song, the Donchester section broke out in a waving blaze of violet and gold; the solid roof seemed to tremble beneath the volleys of cheers that bombarded it; the Donchester boys howled, shrieked, and roared down their congratulations on Archie; the members of the faculty arose and waved hands and handkerchiefs at our hero; and as he passed below, Mildred tossed him a big bouquet of violets and yellow iris. This Archie picked up; waved to the faculty collectively and Mildred particularly, and made his way to the dressing-room, followed by yet more cheers.

At the door of the room, he found Sheahan awaiting him. "I want to congratulate you on your win, Hartley," said the Ameswood boy as he held out his hand. "You're a wonder, and nobody's more right to say so than myself."

"Thank you very much," replied Archie, "But you ran a bully good race yourself."

"Maybe," admitted Sheahan ruefully, as he made a grimace as if he were swallowing a dose of nasty physic. "But it didn't seem so to me. It'll be a lesson to me not to trust to appearances any more. I never dreamed that

you could outsprint me when I first clapped eyes on you. Good-bye. Hope to see you again sometime." He again shook hands and hastened away.

Up came Harper and Travers, both beaming. And they, too, said many kind and congratulatory things. As they were leaving, the captain turned to Archie: "I needn't tell you, Hartley, that Sheahan will do his best to square things up with us—and you—in the relay race. He'll be out for blood."

"I know it, sir. So do the other fellows who are in the race. But I think that we can hold our own."

"It's queer how that youngster gives me confidence," said Harper to the trainer as they drew out of earshot of our hero. "The little beggar is so—so quietly certain that he and his track-mates are going to pull through, that his belief in them and himself is positively infectious."

"Why shouldn't he have faith, Mr. Harper? As I said to you before, we have a bunch of world-beaters this spring."

The afternoon wore on and Donchester held its own and a trifle better. As before, Ameswood was the dangerous rival being only a few points behind when the distance race was called. This Mackay won after a most sensational fin-

ish, Eckwood, the Ameswood runner being only a yard behind him.

After that, however, Donchester played in bad luck, not only losing its lead but falling some points behind its rival. Poor Cherub contributed to the slump by failing to make good in the shot-putting contest.

But two events remained, the low hurdles and the relay race. Travers and Harper took counsel together.

"Evans is pretty sure of the hurdles," said Travers tentatively.

"Yes. If he wins them, he will even up matters somewhat. But to take that trophy home, we *must* capture the relay. I'm sure of Hartley in this event, but not sure of the others."

"I told you that Hartley has been coaching his team-mates in touching, I think?"

"You did."

"Then, sir, I don't think that we need build bridges for trouble. He told me a couple of days ago, that the boys were doing all right."

Harper first smiled and then laughed outright. "Only to think," he said, "that not only are we making ourselves comfortable on the strength of the word of this—this kid, but we are relying on him to help us capture the silver gentleman with the javelin. Seems incredible, doesn't it?"

"It would if you didn't know Hartley," replied the old trainer with a shake of his head. "But—there's only one of 'em born in a generation!"

As Harper had hoped, Evans won the hurdles in ready fashion, which brought him well-deserved applause from the spectators, and congratulations from the dressing-room. Then came the first of the relay contests.

"Hartley, what do you think of the other fellows who are to be with you in this?" asked the track captain. He had already told how the points stood, and the responsibility that rested on the Donchester relay team.

"I think that they are all right, sir," answered Archie. "If they'll only touch to-day and run the corners as they have at practice, I—I think that we'll make good." Again he spoke with calm confidence.

"That's all right, then. By the way, your uncle told me to tell you that you have his good wishes for this race, and he feels sure that you will beat Ameswood."

"Thank you, sir, I think we shall," replied Archie, without a trace of conceit in his tone.

"That nephew of yours certainly robs the oven," said Harper to Seymour, a little later. "Nothing seems to feaze him."

CHAPTER XXXV

And now came the call for the relay races, the contests on which so much depended, as far as Donchester was concerned.

It had been arranged by the committee in charge of the meet that the rival schools of New England would meet each other, so as to maintain the interest of both athletes as well as spectators. Accordingly all the leading high and private schools in and around Boston were matched against each other, and each put up a contest that was well worth seeing. It should also be stated in this connection that these races and in the Donchester-Ameswood contest, that the track for the runs at Mechanics Hall, is "banked," that is raised at the turns so that the disadvantage to a runner, is in a measure, overcome. You all know how difficult it is to turn a corner on the flat when running fast, so you will understand the benefit of this banking.

Again were Archie and his team-mates made the recipients of a rousing reception, and again our hero caught sight of the smiling face of

Uncle Horace as he made his way to the dressing-room. Also did he see that Harper was approaching the old Yale athlete.

"Seymour," said the track captain, "this nephew of yours tells me that he is 'holding in' for the sake of giving Ameswood a surprise."

"Yes," said Uncle Horace.

"Well, I have the utmost faith in Archie's good sense and track judgment and yet—and yet—"

"And yet you feel a trifle scary in view of the importance of his team making a good showing in this event—eh?" interrupted Seymour.

"Exactly," admitted Harper. "He is so young and yet he seems to be so coolly sure of himself and his team-mates."

The other laughed. "I can sympathize with you and your feelings, Harper," he said. "But you may make your mind easy about Archie. If he feels confident, you may also. Nothing but an earthquake or a tornado will prevent him from doing his best when it comes to the final test, and I'll wager my life that he is going to do things to Ameswood."

Harper breathed a sigh of relief, and his forehead lost its lines of anxiety.

Back in the dressing-room Archie was giving the other lads a few words of final advice

in regard to the forthcoming race. "These beggars will run their heads off this time," he was saying, "and we'll have to do the same. No taking it easy as in the other races, but from the crack of the pistol, up to the hitting of the tape, we'll have to crowd on all steam. And now I'm going to rest up for the race and you fellows better do the same."

So saying he threw himself down on the carpet and the others followed suit. It was funny to note that while he was physically the smallest of the quartet he was the largest as far as influence was concerned. This goes to show that even in athletics mentality is sometimes of more weight than bulgy muscles or long legs.

So the four runners rested and chatted until the call for them to come up on the track and to get ready for the final race of the day. As they rose to obey, Archie wore his usual expression of cheerfulness. Brown didn't seem to be a bit worried, O'Malley was fidgeting for the fray, while Creasey was thoughtful but not in the least feazed at what was awaiting him and his companions.

Gradually the time came for the tossing of the coin for the pole in the different races, and finally the Ameswood-Donchester race was called by the clerk of the course. In drawing

for the pole, Donchester ran up against its first hard luck, Archie calling heads while the coin rolled toward Sheahan's feet with the tail-side up. The winning of the toss was thought to be a fine omen for the Ameswood runners and supporters, but neither the Donchester team nor the Donchester crowd had a word to say about the happening.

Finally all was ready. The applause that greeted the young athletes as they lined up for the race was as Parrot put it, "tropically thunderous." It rose and fell, boomed and wavered, strengthened and weakened, but didn't let up. In the midst of the tempest of cheers, the lads who were to run the first relays of the race, were straining their ears for the crack of the gun. And in the tense seconds that thus elapsed Archie found time to shoot a glance toward the Donchester section, where sat Mildred waving her tiny handkerchief—as Archie thought—at him.

Of course Sheahan and Archie were placed on the final relays of their respective teams, it being the general rule of such contests that the best runners be saved until the last, this being for obvious reasons. Many an apparently lost relay has been re-won by the clever work of the cracks who have snatched victory out of seeming defeat.

At last the starter called the runners to take their marks. O'Malley was to run the first relay of 390 yards, on account of his ability as a quick starter, and Archie caught himself wondering whether this youngster would remember the instructions given by Harper, which were to the effect that the first runner on a relay team should endeavor to secure the pole in the race and thus enhance his team's chances of victory. This could be done by getting to the first corner before his competitor, or if the other runner was there ahead, by passing him on the outside, not on the inside, for if the runners touched, such an act was considered a gross foul, and was usually punished by disqualification. If the pole, however, can be secured by dashing through on the inside by not touching the opponent such a thing is allowable and is to the runner's great advantage.

Finally the pistol cracked and the first two runners sprang away like frightened deer. O'Malley made a gallant effort to obey Harper's instructions, but Almy of Ameswood was on the same errand, and baffled the Donchester lad in his attempt. For three laps O'Malley and Almy fought it out. Neither seeming to gain any great advantage. At last when the gong was sounded for the final lap Almy leaped forth as if he had been shot from the muzzle of

the gun, and gained a couple of yards' lead for Ameswood. Immediately, Brown of Donchester and Reynolds of Ameswood took up the running on the second relay, and they sped around like a whirlwind amid the frantic cheers of the crowd. As in the preceding relay, there wasn't much to choose between the runners, and try as Brown might to make up the two-yards' lead that Reynolds valiantly held, it was well-nigh impossible. Towards the termination of his relay, however, Brown put up a wonderful sprint and was almost in the act of catching the fleet Ameswood runner as he touched Creasey off to the third relay. It was with a forlorn look from the Donchester cheering section, that this plucky little lad made a mighty effort to overtake the third representative of the Ameswood school. The little chap, however, stuck to his task and finally sped like an arrow to where Archie was waiting him with tense muscles and mind.

Creasey's attempt was greeted with a tremendous shout from the Donchester section, while the school colors waved, as did caps, and hats, and handkerchiefs. Meanwhile the third Ameswood runner not two yards from Creasey was making a superhuman effort to overtake the latter. And let me say right here that the pluck that makes a boy or a man persevere in

the face of defeat, always calls for my admiration whether the race be on the track or in the affairs of life.

The crowd was now hushed, for it realized that within the next few minutes the athletic supremacy of Donchester or Ameswood would be decided for the next twelve months.

Mildred, with parted lips and a red spot on either cheek, was watching Archie intently, her heart beating as she sent all kinds of good wishes in the direction of our hero. Archie himself, was oblivious to all else but the oncoming Creasey who was holding his own gallantly. Archie knew that if the latter could only hold his pace until he touched, nothing, humanly speaking, could prevent Donchester from winning the meet!

So the runners sped. And then, suddenly, unexpectedly, Creasey toward the last swerved, staggered, went down in a heap, recovered himself, limped painfully to Archie whom he touched and then collapsed on the track. By some means or the other—possibly the turn in the track—he had wrenched his ankle.

By the time that Creasey had managed to tap Archie's outstretched arm, the Ameswood runner had already touched Sheahan who was thus enabled to be ten yards or so in the lead when

CREASEY SWERVED, STAGGERED, WENT DOWN IN A HEAP.—*Page 314.*

our hero took up the running. A shout of dismay came from the Donchester sections that changed into a cheer as they saw Archie settle down to run as he never ran before. That agile brain of his not only took in the situation, but made a rapid calculation of the time in which he must cover the distance in order to stay the athletic disaster that was threatening his beloved school. He heard not the roar of encouragement that accompanied his flying feet; he saw not the cloud of waving flags; the multitude of faces alight with the glow that comes from witnessing a gallant fight against great odds! All he knew was, that he must not merely *run* the distance, but that he must *sprint it,* as if it were but 100 instead of 390 yards. Can he do it? *He will,* he says to himself as he sets out to accomplish this, the greatest effort of his athletic career, so far.

Sheahan had, naturally, not looked for such a gruelling ordeal as he was now called on to face. But he replied gallantly to the challenge of his little rival and again the audience applauded madly. Inch by inch, foot by foot, yard by yard, Archie methodically cut down the lead of the Ameswood lad until when the 250-yard mark was reached he was only about three yards in the rear. Sheahan, glancing over his shoulder, tried to spurt. But the pace

was too much for him, and his limbs almost refused to answer the demand made on them.

Meantime, Archie's legs were working like untirable bits of machinery. Uncle Horace, watching him from the centre of the ring, noted with the pride of a trainer not unmixed with the satisfaction of an uncle, the almost perfect form in which his nephew was running; the remarkable "skimming" gait minus showy but useless knee action, that he was using, and the manner in which he was making his hands and arms help him cover the ground.

And Donchester? What about Donchester? Well, if you had been told that it was an institution for the insane and this was the day off for the inmates, you might well have believed it! Donchester leaped and yelled and waved and shrieked until it was leapless and voiceless. The other schools caught the infection of enthusiasm and followed suit.

At 320 yards, Archie and Sheahan were neck and neck. From that time on until our hero carried away the tape, all was over but the shouting. At the finish, he led the Ameswood boy by a full three yards. Possibly he might have done better, but, as he subsequently told Mackay, "There was no use rubbing it into Sheahan."

I wish you could have seen and heard the

scene that followed the announcement of Donchester's victory! I can't describe it, for words simply wouldn't do it justice. But next to Donchester, Ameswood—good old Ameswood—made the biggest row and waved its flags the hardest. This is saying much. And in the midst of the pleasant pandemonium, the cause of it all, stepped to where poor Creasey was still lying.

"Are you hurt much, old chap?" said Archie.

"Pains a bit, but I'm more hurt at having nearly lost the race for Donchester."

"But we won," replied Archie consolingly. "Isn't there anything that I can do for you?"

"Nothing, thanks," said Creasey; "thanks all the same."

And this, too, in the midst of the enthusiasm of two or three thousand people. Can you wonder that Archie was popular with his schoolmates?

Then with a final bow to the faculty seats —and Mildred—our hero made his way to the dressing-room, there to find Uncle Horace and the members of the athletic committee and Travers awaiting him. And they said—oh, well, you'll have to imagine the reception that they gave him!

Also must it be left to your imagination to picture the ride back to Donchester that night;

the pleasant times that Archie and the other athletes had in the faculty car; the nice things that were said to him by everybody, including Dr. Pardee; how the Ridgeleys made much of him; how Mildred shyly congratulated him, and how Archie for the first time in his young life paid a compliment to a girl by saying that her gift had done a whole lot toward making him win, or words to that effect. And Mildred, who like all her sex, admired boys—and for that matter, men—who do things, looked the thoughts that she couldn't speak and smiled adorably.

It was a very tired and sleepy lot of youngsters that the cars unloaded at the Donchester station, but they tried, nevertheless, to "hoist" Archie up the hill on top of which stood the school-buildings, whereat, the Vigilantes gathered around him and frustrated their well-meant but—to Archie—not acceptable attentions. So instead, they had to content themselves with drowsily singing the school song and giving him a round of good-night cheers after they had escorted him to his dormitory.

"Sleep soundly, O skimmer of the cinders! destroyer of sprinting records!" exclaimed Parrot, who, with other of Archie's intimates, had lingered at the dormitory door after the others had gone. "May the wails of

Ameswood be thy lullaby to-night, and the peans of Donchester thy soothing potion!"

"Oh, flitting jack-rabbit of the eastern prairies!" droned Curtis in imitation of Parrot, "may thy underpinning continue to bring confusion to those who crouch with thee, contesting thy supremacy!"

"Oh, much-tried minny of mine," broke in Mackay, "may a murrain seize on these thy alleged friends who are standing between thee and thy much-needed rest; shooting off their capacious mouths so that they may even hear themselves jabber!"

"I believe that that same remark means that we aren't yearned for in these same parts," said Curtis. "Let's vamoose!" Which all did.

CHAPTER XXXVI

Looking back over my own school-days, I've concluded that while every month in the year was a more or less happy one, yet those of the spring were perhaps a shade the happiest. Youngsters are naturally in sympathy with life, especially young life, and so it is that the season of green buds and sprouting grass, opening flowers and gurgling brooks that have burst their winter bonds, birds' nests and lambkins, and so on, appeal to them particularly.

It was so with Archie and his chums, and it is so with all normal boys.

Archie, as has been said elsewhere, had a relative who had been trying to interest the boy in natural history and to that end had given him a field-glass and a book on native birds. But a love of nature was one of our hero's characteristics that the field-glass, also the camera, the bird-book, and several works in the school library only served to foster. So it was that he and Mackay and sometimes two or three others of the quintet got into the habit of taking long walks into the surrounding coun-

try, returning laden with botanical specimens and rock-chippings—Mackay was usually the geologist of these expeditions—and note-books full of observations on the things animate and inanimate that had been seen and dozens of exposed films and the health and appetite that wait on such trips.

"Mac," said Archie one afternoon, as they were preparing for an exploration of Upper Mountain, a wild and wooded hill about three miles from Donchester, in which, so local tales had it, nested several families of hawks, "we've never taken the Spud with us. What's the matter with his going along this afternoon? He'd just love to be with us, I'm sure. The last time we went off for a trip the poor little beggar's eyes were full of tears when he saw us starting and I thought to myself that I'd ask you about taking him this trip."

Mackay hesitated. "I'd like him to come along, but I don't see how we can. Even yet, he hasn't quite gotten over the crack on the coco that the Snaggy crowd handed him, and he isn't what I'd call a rugged party at the best of times. He simply couldn't stand the hike that we are to take this P. M."

"You're right," admitted Archie as he went on packing his haversack; "s'pose we'll have to take him some other day although did you see

his looks last night when we were talking about Upper Mountain? Camera, films, pencil, glasses, bug-bottles and chloroform, note-book, blotters, thermos bottle, sandwiches, knife, trowel—think that's about all. By the great cricket! I've got it, Mac!"

"Stick to it and mind it doesn't bite you!" replied Mackay without looking up from what he called his "duffle-bag" that he was cramming with all sorts of things, including a coffee percolator, sugar, and condensed milk.

"Listen!" Archie had dropped the haversack and he was smiling brightly. "We'll hire Aunt Sally's rig for this afternoon, drive to Upper Mountain, taking the Spud with us, hunt for the hawks' nests, have a picnic there, and drive home again. We won't wear our legs off and the Spud will be tickled to death, poor kid."

"But," objected Mackay, "nobody can drive that mule of Aunt Sally's except that nephew of hers."

"Then we'll take the nephew along with us. While we are doing the mountain, he can be singing soothing songs to the mu-el."

"I've squandered most of my substance in riotous living, including orgies of coweyes, Arch. Therefore, I don't feel equal to going

to the expense of a one-mule-power automobile."

"That's all right, old man, I've plenty of cash for both of us. Does the proposition go?"

"It goes like a hungry mouse for cheese!" answered Mackay.

"Then I'll hunt up the Spud. Back in a couple of shakes of a lamb's tail." And good-natured Archie darted away to return presently with the Spud whose face was crimson with delight and whose eyes were big with anticipation.

Next, Archie taking advantage of his out-of-bounds permit, hastened to Aunt Sally's and as the mule was free from other engagements he made a requisition for that animal, ditto George Napoleon Roanoke Johnston, the nephew, called "Nap" for short, and ten minutes later, the party made a start for the mountain, Mackay sitting beside the driver and the Spud cuddling close to Archie.

And didn't they have a jolly day of it? Spud, country-bred lad that he was, was quite at home in the woods and showed the other boys two or three wrinkles to which they had been strangers, such as making cups out of big leaves, and weaving cunning little baskets from grass-blades. And it was the Spud's sharp

eyes that located the hawks' nests—there were two of them. He didn't do it by searching the tree-tops with those selfsame eyes either, but by observing the ground beneath clumps of likely looking trees. By and by, he found bits of fur and clots of feathers cluttering the ground below a group of tall pines. He called to the others and the trio searched the upper branches for the nests. There they were, sure enough, high up, built on the ends of boughs that were obviously too thin to bear the weight of a boy, while mamma or papa hawk, looked down on the would-be nesters and shrieked hoarse derision.

"Isn't that a shame!" said Mackay; "a couple of measly hawks putting us human gents at defiance."

"All depends on how you look at it," replied Archie philosophically. "If we were those birds we'd be patting out backs with our wings to think how clever we were to build in so safe a place."

"Maybe, but we're not the birds," responded Mackay.

All the same, the lads had a gorgeous time of it that day. More nests were located, and Archie took very good pictures of some of them. After the luncheon had been eaten, the spare spaces in the bags were filled with bo-

tanical and geological specimens; some rainbowed butterflies were captured and mercifully done to death with the help of the chloroform; the same fate awaited beetles whose green and golden metallic tints proved their undoing, and down by the Broad, a number of water plants and some fresh-water shells were added to the day's plunder.

"It'll keep us busy for a couple of days, looking up and identifying the things that we've got," remarked Archie as he gathered up a dainty tiny spiral shell from the shore of the Broad.

"What's the matter with us starting a 'Field, Forest, and Stream' society, the members of which shall help each other in collecting and naming specimens?" suggested Mackay. "I'll bet that Dr. Pardee would fall in love with the idea. We might even get him to assign a portion of one of the halls for museum and exhibition purposes. Fancy one of the cases being filled with long-legged grasshoppers labeled; '*Archii Hartlii* or swift hurdler; habitat, Donchester.'"

Archie laughed in spite of himself. "Or a case containing pieces of quartz named '*Mackaii Clinkus* on account of the clinking noise that they give forth when struck,'" he retorted. "Joking apart, though, I think that that idea

of yours about the society and the museum, is just first-chop. I'll do what I can to help it along!"

"And Oi'd like to do the same," chimed in the Spud.

"You shall be a charter member, Spuddy dear," declared Mackay, his eyes lit with good-humor.

"An' what's that?"

"A charter member is a person who plays starter to a magnificent idea—such as is this museum business. He helps to send it off, to get it going, you know. Ordinary members are just the spectators along the trackside."

Spud looked doubtfully at him and turned to our hero.

"Is he spaking the truth?" he asked.

"As nearly as he can," answered Archie. "Yes, he's about right in what he has told you."

"Well, you young ingrate," began Mackay slowly, eyeing the Spud as he spoke. "To cast asparagus on my truthfulness, and that, too, after I've adopted you as my minny and introduced you to Nap and the mule and proved my fatherly interest in you in other ways."

The Spud began to look troubled and his lip trembled. "Oi'm sorry—" he began.

"Nonsense, Kiddo!" cried Mackay as he saw

that the little chap was taking the clink in earnest. "I'm only jollying."

The Spud controlled himself with an effort and put a pacificatory hand on the elder boy's sleeve. "Oi'm glad that 'tis in fun you are," he said. "Sure Oi'd be hurt to the heart-core if you were angry."

"Oh, he couldn't get angry if he tried," broke in Archie, "and I think it's about time we hit the trail to Donchester."

"Same here. I'm beginning to suffer from my old disease of drumminess. Ho! ho! for the merry, merry mule!"

Mackay was sitting on the edge of his bed in his pajamas, regarding the pattern of the carpet thoughtfully. "Archie," said he suddenly, "didn't we have a lovely day of it?"

"Simply beauteous."

"But I don't think it would have been half so jolly if we hadn't taken the Spud along."

"Yes?" Archie's tone was one of inquiry.

"I s'pose that you don't get half the fun out of things when you play piggy and don't share 'em with others," went on Mackay musingly.

"No, I don't think you do," said Archie decidedly.

"Never struck me so much as it did to-day.

Did you see how that kid—the Spud—enjoyed every minute of the outing?"

"Yes, I did."

"Half of the pleasure of the day was watching him."

Archie made no reply.

"And I feel awfully obliged to you for proposing that we take him; I'm through with playing pork from now and ever, amen."

"You never were of that breed," declared Archie.

"Yes, I was. Anyhow, I was just as bad as if I had been real selfish—I was thoughtless, when it came to others. But I'm through, as I've just said." And he kept his word.

Then, too, when the season was a little farther advanced, Archie and some of his chums tried their luck at the Broad with their fishing rods. The finny prey that they captured weren't so big or so gamey as those that you read about in the outing magazines, but they afforded plenty of sport and excitement to the young anglers. After one of these piscatorial picnics, as Parrot called them, Aunt Sally was regularly called on to cook the fish, and how good did they taste to the youngsters!

The Broad, too, had one or two capital bathing-places, where the water deepened gradually and the bottom was sandy. Archie was a fair

swimmer and got a great deal of fun out of the water, in consequence. But this was not all. Dr. Pardee, knowing the importance of a knowledge of swimming, once or twice during the summer, gave what was called "a water festival" at which there was all kinds of sports of a natatorial kind, including diving, water-polo; —tilting, each combatant being mounted on a barrel and armed with a pole that had its end padded, tilting from canoes in the same fashion, races and so on. At such times, Archie held his own, although he didn't shine in the same way that he did on the track.

As I told in my first book, there was furthermore, a boathouse belonging to the school at which were kept canoes and skiffs. But only swimmers were allowed to use the former.

So Archie and his chums had the jolliest of times that summer; including participation in several picnics given by the Ridgeleys. With the exception of Professor Ah, almost all the other members of the faculty were bachelors, which accounted for the former playing so prominent part in what may be called the home life of the school. These Ridgeley picnics were very nice affairs, for Mrs. Ridgeley knew the appetites of boys, both as to capacity and tastes and she appealed to both through the medium of the cooks of the school. When the invita-

tions had been issued to one of these affairs, the invited made it a point to carry the eatables and drinkables to the place selected for the festivities.

And didn't Archie enjoy them? I should say he did. For the picnics gave him opportunities to take Mildred's picture; and gather wildflowers for her; and let her use his field-glass, and tell her all sorts of field lore, and identify the birds that they saw, and many more interesting things. The end of each of these picnics brought the conclusion to Archie that Mildred was the jolliest girl that he had ever known; while as far as the little maiden was concerned, she was positive that he was the nicest and cleverest boy that had ever come to Donchester.

All this time, however, Archie didn't neglect his athletics. He religiously jogged each day around the track; with the help of Mackay practised starting, and was a regular attendant at the gymnasium. Then, too, he took the Spud in hand and taught him the rudiments of running. The little chap, by the way, had quite recovered from the injury inflicted by the Snaggyites and was eager to learn to sprint, so eager indeed, that Archie had to check him on several occasions lest he overtax his strength. And our hero after a time, saw with much de-

light that his protégé was giving indications of becoming a really very good runner considering his years.

So the happy spring and summer wore away until the time came for vacation.

"Archie," said Mackay a few days before the holidays began, "I've got father's consent to take the Spud home with me. We, that is, my people, are going to spend the summer in Maine, and my minny will come with us, if his uncle will allow him to. What do you think of it?"

"It's just splendid. You're a good sort, Mac, to think about the little chap." And so the Spud had the loveliest of vacations, thanks to the thought of his protector.

CHAPTER XXXVII

Vacation time was over and the Donchesterians were once more gathering at the school. The scenes described in the first chapter of this book were reenacted with more vigor than ever; minnies were appropriated by second-class boys; there was the usual cheering and singing, and in the midst of it all, Blobs, and O'Brien alighted with a crowd of others from the 'bus that plied from the depot to the school entrance.

Mackay who was discussing his holiday and the part that the Spud played in it, with Archie, caught sight of the returned prodigals as they entered the campus.

"Look who's there," said he. Archie turned and saw.

"How are you going to treat 'em?" asked Mackay as he watched his chum's face.

"Oh, civilly, but I won't throw my arms around them. Shall wait until I see if they've been cured of their love of fibbing. I've no use for liars." Archie spoke with emphasis.

Parrot, Curtis, and the Spud joined the

group. "I observe that the Horrible Examples have returned," said Parrot. "Do we give them the cut direct, the shoulder chilly, or the warm hand?"

"I vote that we do nothing until we see how the critters shape to behave," suggested Curtis.

"Which resolution I amend by offering the suggestion that we—the Vigilantes, do send them to Coventry for a trial month." It was Evans who spoke. "I shall cut them, anyhow."

"Oh, watch them, and let's act toward them as that watching justifies," said Archie.

"Archibald, my fellow citizens, likes to be on the level in all things. See how he behaves on a level cinder track and now note his level-headedness in dealing with the topic under discussion! You have heard the resolution as put by him. All those in its favor will signify their assent by saying 'Aye.' "

A chorus of "Ayes" followed.

"Contrary, 'No.' "

"Have it," commented Parrot. "The affirmative vote is unanimous?"

In the weeks that followed, the policy suggested by Archie was followed, with the result that Blobs and O'Brien were admitted to a certain degree of chumminess with their schoolmates. They showed an unmistakable desire to reinstate themselves in the good graces of

their companions, and the latter gradually responded.

In the meantime, Archie in his new-found dignity of the second-class boy, had taken charge of a minny who was the son of a Yale professor, the latter being a friend of Uncle Horace. Kingsley—Arthur Kingsley—was the newcomer's name and he was a shy youngster of about the Spud's age, having good manners and a gravity of speech when he did talk, which was not often. And Mackay, learning of the profession of Arthur's father, dubbed the lad, the "Professor." So, as the Professor was he known, and, incidently, made fast friends with the Spud right away.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

The months slipped by; the fall try-outs came and passed in a manner satisfactory to the athletic committee, Archie more than holding his own on the cinder track. Then an early and severe winter set in. November arrived to the accompaniment of a swirling snow-storm. Others followed. Next, came rains that swept fields and trees and hilltops clear of the fleecy whiteness that had hidden them for a full fortnight, and then came a series of sharp, hard frosts that promised fine skating. In accordance with Donchester custom, a delegation appointed by the athletic committee visited the Broad and the day before Thanksgiving, reported that the ice was in smooth and sound condition. This brought "joy unconfined" to the hearts of the Donchesterians and much overhauling of skates and oiling of straps.

The Thanksgiving morning service and exercises being over, and luncheon swallowed with an appetite due to the snappy air, the boys prepared for an afternoon of fun on the frozen surface. As usual, the quintet of chums flocked

together, the trio of minnies being with them. And the clatter and chatter and laughter that they made while on their way to the lake!

Half-way to the Broad, the big faculty 'bus passed them, filled with instructors and their friends and families. They, too, were going to share in the icy jollity. Archie with much satisfaction, saw that Mildred, looking more pretty than ever in a soft fur coat and a tightly fitting fur turban, was among the party. As the boys stood aside to let the 'bus pass, the little maiden sent a smile and a wave of her hand at them in general and Archie in particular. Off came caps, and the one that remained off the longest, belonged to our hero.

The Broad seemed a very long way off to the youngsters, not that they were tired of the walk, but they were impatient to get busy with the skate-blades. It was reached at last, however, and then came the rush to see who could get on the ice first. On such occasions, the boat-house was used as a dressing-room and storage for superfluous garments, a big, bonnie fire of logs blazing in its open fireplace in the meantime. But the boys usually gave it over to the faculty, and the ladies, if there happened to be any present, and used the bushes that fringed the Broad for wardrobes, and the rocks for seats. It may be added that Dicky, the old fel-

low who was in charge of the boathouse, kept a couple of ladders and ropes in readiness against any accident that might befall the skaters.

It wasn't long before the ice was cracking—as all sound ice does—beneath the weight and movement of some hundreds of youngsters who raced and darted and wheeled as if they had wings. Others gathered around those of their number who were doing fancy figures or trick stunts. Archie, after a turn or two in the middle of the Broad, skated slowly toward the boathouse. Of course, he wasn't on the lookout for Mildred. Oh, no! At the same time she wasn't on the ice and he knew that she might be at any moment.

Presently, she and her father came out of the doorway, walked toward the Broad with the queer gait that people use when wearing skates, and got on the ice. Professor Ah skated with the dignified solemnity that became a faculty member. Mildred, holding his hand, moved with the grace and lightness of a tuft of wind-blown thistledown. Both caught sight of Archie simultaneously. Mildred's face lit up with pleasure as the boy's cap left his head.

"How do you—ah—do, Hartley?" said the professor. "I—ah—think that we—ah—passed you on the road—ah—hither?"

Archie executed a backward and sideways sweep that brought him by the side of Mildred. "Yes, sir," he replied, "I saw you in the omnibus. Will you allow me?" the last to the girlie as he held out his hand to her.

"Thank you," she said and Archie, taking her tiny hand gently and firmly in his, glided along by her side.

So the trio made the round of the Broad, and while so doing, Archie privately came to the conclusion that skating under such circumstances, was the loveliest thing that ever was, next to sprinting. Also he caught himself regretting that Mildred by reason of her sex, couldn't figure on the cinder path. If she only could, wouldn't he be glad to teach her the art of running one hundred yards in eleven seconds or less!

"If you two young—ah—people would like to—ah—skate together," said the professor as the boathouse was again reached, "you may—ah—do so for a time. I prefer to—ah—rest."

Archie turned a look of entreaty on Mildred, and she—well, she didn't seem to be a bit sorry that the spin around the Broad had tired her father. So off the couple went, chatting, laughing, and obvious to everybody else on the ice.

It wasn't until Archie happened to pass Mackay and Parrot, that he woke up to the fact

that either he was monopolizing Mildred, or she him. But the significant grins on the faces of his two friends brought the truth home to him, and he smiled sheepishly in reply. Mildred had caught the exchange of glances and rightly read the meaning.

"I'm keeping you from your chums," said she, "and I oughtn't to do so. Please take me back to the boathouse, and then you can join them."

"Oh, no," replied Archie, "I don't want to, really. I'd ever so much sooner skate with you—"

"Now, Hartley, I think it's time that I had some of Miss Mildred's society, don't you?" It was Professor Munkittrick who spoke, his bearded jolly face lit with laughter. "I've been jealous all the afternoon, you know."

Mildred disengaged her hand from Archie's. "Please go," she said softly. "We'll skate again together before we go home." And so, with a tinkling laugh, she glided away with the professor.

Archie turned in the direction of his chums, prepared to receive the clinking that he knew would be awaiting him. And he got it, yes, he got it in plenty. But he took it all in good part and when it was over, joined in the jollity that was going on around him.

Half an hour passed and the Vigilantes were enjoying a game of cross-tag at the end of the Broad, furthest from the boathouse, when Parrot called attention to a crowd of boys that had gathered on the ice some distance away. "This calls for investigation," said he; "let each gallant lord wha' loves honor and me; let him follow the bonnet o' P-a-r-r-o-t!" And so saying, he shot away in the direction of the gathering, the others trailing behind him.

CHAPTER XXXIX

In the centre of a ring of perhaps one hundred and fifty boys was Mildred, performing some pretty figures on her skates. They were not difficult or unusual figures, you know, but they were being done so daintily and the little girl was such a general favorite with the Donchesterians that the crowd that was thickening rapidly around her, was flatteringly liberal with its applause. Mildred wasn't "showing off," for, like Archie, she hadn't a scrap of egotism in her make-up. She was skating just because she liked it, in the first place, and because she felt that she was in the midst of a large family of nice brothers, in the second.

Parrot stirred uneasily after a few moments of watching.

"Some of those fool monitors ought to keep this multitude moving," he said. "We're standing right over the bottom springs that feed the Broad. Dicky's told me all about 'em. The springs are warmer than the lake water and consequently the ice must be thinner hereabouts. It isn't safe at the best of times for

a big crowd to get together on a sheet of ice—"

"You sure must have had frogs for ancestors, you croak so," laughed Curtis.

"The citizens of Troy probably made a similar insane remark to Cassandra," replied Parrot quietly. "Anyhow, I'm going to tip off the Head about the springs." He skated away.

"First time I ever knew Parrot to show funk," began Mackay. "It's ridiculous to—" He got no further. The ice around Mildred suddenly groaned; gave a series of sharp cracks and bent and swerved sickeningly. The crowd made a simultaneous rush backwards. As it did so, the ice split right beneath the girl, and with a faint shriek of terror, she disappeared in the chilly waters that surged over the floating fragments of ice. All the others managed to reach the solid ice in safety.

Archie, obeying the promptings of self-preservation, had also fled as the ice cracked. Now, as he glanced backward, he saw what had happened. Without a moment's hesitation, he tore his sweater over his head, and with a yell to Mackay to fetch the ladders from the boathouse, skated to the edge of the broken ice and without stopping, dived in the direction that he had seen Mildred disappear.

Now it so happened that the Cherub, who was just recovering from a sprained leg, couldn't

skate, had gone into the boathouse to warm himself. When warmed he turned to watch the skaters through one of the windows that commanded a view of the lake. When he saw the crowd suddenly back away and Archie return and dive, he instantly realized what had happened and what the occasion called for. Before Mackay and the others were half-way to the boathouse, the Cherub had seized a ladder and a coil of rope and was tearing over the ice towards the scene of the accident. Willing hands helped him rush his burden. But it was probably the Cherub's prompt action, that brought about the saving of the little girl and our hero.

As Archie came up—under the ice—he opened his eyes and to his joy, saw the body of the little girl right above him. Her hands were beating pitifully against the imprisoning glassiness and the heel of one of her skates cut his face badly as he rose to her. Seizing her between the shoulders and drawing her down on him, Archie kicked out hastily. A second or so later he had cleared the ice while the blessed light of the day fell on the pair. Freeing his bursting lungs, he took a deep inspiration. Then only did he realize that Mildred was unconscious and that the chill of the water seemed to be eating into his flesh, numbing his muscles and making him

drowsy and stupid, while the weight of his skates and the girl seemed to be forcing him beneath the water. Desperately he struggled to the edge of the ice, which he caught with one hand, while he supported Mildred with the other.

It broke as he grasped it, and the water again closed over the heads of Mildred and himself. With a prayer on his bubbling lips, Archie waited until they rose to the surface, and once more struck out for the ice. This time the edge held. His right hand clutched and held on to it instinctively, but the deadly chill struck deeper at his senses.

Then came a confusion of thoughts and feeling, during which he dimly felt somebody catch him by the collar, of his telling that somebody to get the girl out of the water first and then—then—why, he woke up to find himself in the boathouse with Dr. Price bending over him, Curtis and Mackay rubbing his legs furiously, the Spud, white-faced and wide-eyed, watching from a corner, while nearer, his minny was blubbering copiously.

Archie gave a sort of sobbing sigh, and blinked stupidly at the others. Mackay let out a whoop of delight.

"Where is Mildred?" asked Archie, weakly, of the doctor.

"On her way home in the 'bus, my boy." The physician smoothed our hero's head with a soothing hand.

"Is—is she all right?" whispered Archie.

"Yes, so I think. But she wouldn't be if it hadn't been for you. And you mustn't talk any more for the present. The ambulance will be here presently."

"May I say one word to him, Doctor?" asked Parrot. The former nodded.

"Then I'd like to remark, young man"—the Parrot turned to Archie—"that any further demonstration of your specialty of fishing people out of the Broad will lead to my resignation from Donchester. I can't stand these continual shocks to my nerves. And Archie, old man"—Parrot's voice took on an unwonted tenderness—"what would I—what would all of us do, if your pluck led to your coming to grief?"

CHAPTER XL

Archie, thanks to a good constitution that had been hardened and developed by athletics, was up and around the day following; a trifle shaky perhaps, but, on the whole, his usual self. With Mildred, it was different. The mental and physical shock of the accident had proved too much for her and she was confined to her bed in consequence. Later, came the rumor that she was threatened with pneumonia, at which the whole school was distressed, Archie in particular being affected. That day, he secured out-of-bounds leave, using it for the purpose of arranging with a Donchester florist to send a daily supply of flowers to the invalid.

He also paid morning and nightly calls to the Ridgeley quarters in order to keep in touch with the condition of the patient. When it was known that Dr. Price had managed to ward off the threatened attack, wasn't Archie glad, and didn't he join in the rejoicings of Mildred's father and mother? But this is anticipating.

It is hardly necessary to say that from being popular with his schoolmates, Archie was now

elevated to a height of laudation that was not far removed from worship of the hero sort. All boys stand ready to recognize and applaud an act of unselfish courage, and when that courage is exhibited by one who has other good qualities to recommend him, why, the applause is redoubled. It was so in this case. Donchester was already proud of Archie on the score of his athletic achievements; it had not forgotten his gallantry when saving the life of Snaggy as told in the first book of this series, and was fond of him just because "he was he," as Parrot once put it. When to all this was added his deed of pluck in the way related in the preceding chapter, why, the admiration of his fellows bubbled over into wild enthusiasm. It was a good thing for Archie that he was free from "hydro" as has been remarked on more than one occasion, otherwise he might have become insufferably conceited.

Then his father, on getting the news, ran over to Donchester to see Archie. And all that he said in the way of praise was, "I'm proud of you, my son." But as he spoke he held the boy's hand in his and looked him in the eyes. And Archie knew the wealth of love and admiration that were behind the few words. Uncle Horace wrote a congratulatory letter; so did his mother, only her letter was more loving

than congratulatory. And from cousins and other uncles and yet more relatives, there came epistles of a pleasant nature.

Dr. Pardee made a little speech to the school about Archie. The faculty sent him its collective good wishes and compliments and as for the Ridgeleys—why, they couldn't do enough for him. Mrs. Ridgeley cried hard when trying to thank him for saving Mildred, and kissed him just as the Mater used to do; Professor Ah, choked and coughed and wiped his spectacles severely when endeavoring to express his appreciation of the—ah—most courageous—ah—act of the youngster. The local papers would have given him a write-up of several columns if they had had a chance, but Archie fled when he learned that their reporters and photographers were on his trail, and so they had to content themselves with a sensational story of how it all happened, illustrated by pictures drawn by the staff artists in which there was much more imagination than truth.

The athletic committee gave him a feed at Aunt Sally's; and the school, just before the holidays, presented him with a gold medal on which were inscribed the words: "To Archibald Jefferson Hartley, for bravery. November 28th, 191.. From his Schoolmates." These and more honors were paid him. But the

reward that he liked best took the form of Mildred's personal thanks which she gave him on the first day that she could leave her room and come downstairs. Archie had been invited by the Ridgeleys to meet her, and when he reached the quarters, he found her lying on a couch, wrapped in a violet and gold shawl and looking very pale but prettier than ever. At least, he thought so. And when she held out her hand to him and with trembling lips and swimming eyes, told him that she never could thank him enough for saving her life, Archie couldn't reply, but simply gripped her hand and looked the things that he would have liked to say but couldn't!

Well, this book must draw to a close, and with it, the relation of Archie's school-days. This may be said, however: our hero continued to progress in both studies and athletics, doing credit to himself as far as the former concerned and bringing added glory to Donchester by reason of the latter. Although Archie's old friends gradually got out, he was equally popular with the newcomers. The minnies especially took to him, for they knew instinctively that in Archie they had a sympathetic friend.

It was still while he was in the fourth class that the athletic committee elected Archie track captain. Usually, such an honor was reserved

for a fifth-class "man," but the committee knew its business. That the result justified its action, we need have no doubt. In fact, Archie could hardly fail to develop along right lines, so well-grounded was he in clean living and fair conduct. He represented athletic life properly enjoyed and made to minister to the higher purposes of existence, as it should. He never lost sight of what is, after all, the main purpose for which schools are conducted. His intimacy with the Ridgeleys continued, and the motto of the green-and-gold charm was made easier of remembrance and application by the maturing winsomeness of Mildred, and the gracious kindness of her parents.

We will leave Archie, at least for the present, happy in his friendships and wholesome ambitions for completing his course at Donchester with credit to himself and all who had shown such interest in his efforts and achievements.

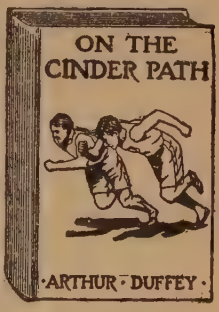
THE END

ON THE CINDER PATH

Or Archie Hartley's First Year at Donchester

By ARTHUR DUFFEY

Illustrated by John Goss 12mo Cloth $1.25



THE author, who was the undisputed world's champion sprinter from 1901 to 1905, is clearly the man to tell boys how to run, and this he does in this book in the best possible fashion. But any one thinking it to be mainly a story of running, owing its existence to the prominence of Mr. Duffey in that sport, will do both book and author a great injustice. It is an exceptionally well-told description of life at a great American school for boys, and the original of "Donchester" will be easily recognized. It is full of bright and wholesome life, and is throughout an appeal to the best side of boy nature, and full of good sense, especially in showing the proper relation between physical, mental, and moral excellence.

"There is much good advice to would-be sprinters on clean living and proper training, and Mr. Duffey's boy readers undoubtedly will find much to hold their interest."—*Boston Transcript.*

"It is a fine, hearty description of school life, which any live boy will enjoy."—*Chicago Tribune.*

"The book is lively and entertaining and will find a sure popularity."—*San Francisco Call.*

"The story is one that appeals to the manliness of students, and stimulates ambition to succeed in all lines of work."—*Evening Wisconsin, Milwaukee.*

"The story is written entertainingly and through it runs a vein of excellent advice on how to train and run."—*Rochester Herald.*

"The book is interesting and makes its appeal to the better side of boy nature."—*Religious Telescope, Dayton, Ohio.*

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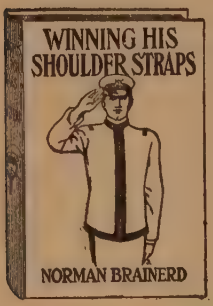
WINNING HIS SHOULDER STRAPS



A ROUSING story of life in a military school by one who thoroughly knows all its features. Bob Anderson, the hero, is a good friend to tie to, and each of his four particular friends is a worthy companion, with well-sustained individuality. Athletics are plentifully featured, and every boy is a natural fellow, who talks and acts like a bright, up-to-date lad in real life.

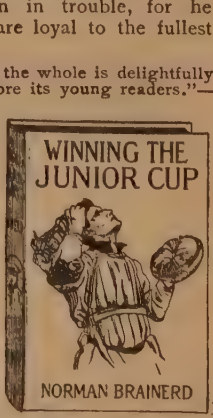
"The story throughout is clean and wholesome, and will not fail to be appreciated by any boy reader who has red blood in his veins."—*Kennebec Journal.*

WINNING THE EAGLE PRIZE

THE hero not only works his way at Chatham Military School after his father's financial misfortune, but has the pluck to try for a prize which means a scholarship in college. It is very hard for a lad of his make-up to do the requisite studying, besides working and taking a prominent part in athletics, and he is often in trouble, for he scorns to evade responsibility. His four friends are loyal to the fullest extent, and all comes right in the end.

"Athletics play a prominent part in the story and the whole is delightfully stimulating in the fine ideals of life which it sets before its young readers."—*Chicago News.*

WINNING THE JUNIOR CUP



A CUP is to be presented by the Junior class to the one of the two lower classes that they consider the manlier in muscles and morals, and the manliest one in the class is to be its custodian. The resolute individuality of big, athletic "Stub" Barrows has caused him to be an unlikely candidate. Nevertheless, he enters the contest, and by uncommon will power and stability of character brings his aspiration to a triumphant reality.

"The book is of more than usual excellence in an abundant output of boys' stories of uniformly high standard. It has grip without being 'yellow.' The descriptions of games are more than ordinarily lifelike and stirring."—*N. Y. Sun.*

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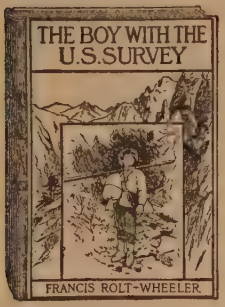
THE BOY WITH THE U. S. SURVEY



THIS story describes the thrilling adventures of members of the U. S. Geological Survey, graphically woven into a stirring narrative that both pleases and instructs. The author enjoys an intimate acquaintance with the chiefs of the various bureaus in Washington, and is able to obtain at first hand the material for the books.

"There is abundant charm and vigor in the narrative which is sure to please the boy readers and will do much toward stimulating their patriotism by making them alive to the needs of conservation of the vast resources of their country."—*Chicago News.*

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"It is a fascinating romance of real life in our country, and will prove a great pleasure and inspiration to the boys who read it."—*The Continent, Chicago.*

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THROUGH the experiences of a typically bright American boy, the author shows the growth and resources of our vast country, and how the necessary information is gathered. The securing of this frequently involves hardship and peril, requiring arduous journeys by dog-team in the frozen north and by launch in the snake-haunted and alligator-filled Everglades of Florida, while the enumerator whose work lies among the dangerous criminal classes of the greater cities must take his life in his own hands.

"Every young man should read this story from cover to cover, thereby getting a clear conception of conditions as they exist to-day, for such knowledge will have a clean, invigorating and healthy influence on the young growing and thinking mind."—*Boston Globe.*

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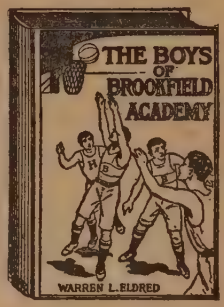

THIS story tells of a boys' school, with a glorious past, but an uncertain future, largely due to the wrong kind of a secret society, a vital problem in hundreds of schools to-day.

The boys, after testing his patience in every way that youthful ingenuity can suggest, come to rally about an athletic and brainy young graduate in the splendid transformation of the society, and soon of the entire academy, in one of the best school and athletic stories yet written.

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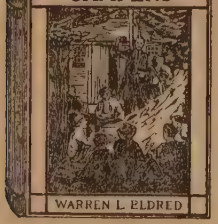

THIS is a story of active boys of fifteen or so. They are very fortunate in the friendship of the principal of their school and his friend, an athletic young doctor. Under the care of these two they go into camp on an island well suited to the purpose, and within easy distance of a thronged summer resort. A series of exciting ball games and athletic contests with the boys at the hotel naturally follows, and the boys display as many varieties of human nature as could their elders.

"Mr. Eldred's book is almost certain to meet with a ready response from young readers, for not only are the boys filled with life and vigor of a true youthful and appreciable variety but their experiences are entertaining in themselves and may perhaps give the young readers ideas for summer plans of their own."—*Chicago Tribune.*

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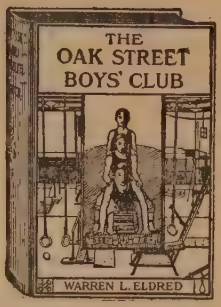

THE "gang" spirit in boys is ever present, and is becoming better recognized and understood, and boys' clubs are a distinct and growing feature of modern life. Mr. Eldred tells of rival clubs in the same parish, and of the triumph of common sense and business-like methods over jealousy and intrigue, though in the face of great odds. The power to be exerted by one boy possessing the qualities of a leader and the value of having such a boy on the right side are strikingly shown. The varied activities of the young members make an interesting story for boys, while the incidental lessons to be drawn render the book worthy the attention of older readers.

"Mr. Eldred excels in many ways as a writer of boys' books, but nowhere more than in the sparkling and witty conversations with which his characters entertain themselves and every reader. This is certainly a boys' book of the best type, witty, interesting, alive with action from start to finish."—*Portland Express.*

"He is able to give an interesting story with matter in it calculated to rouse their ambition and higher qualities."—*Los Angeles Herald.*

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"The story has a distinct moral value, in addition to being entertaining."—*Chicago News.*

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ST. DUNSTAN SERIES

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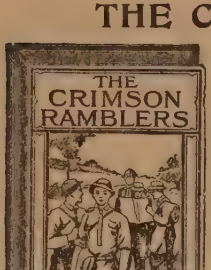
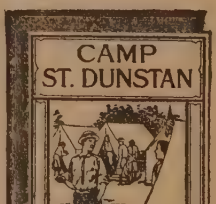


THIS is a story of jolly life at St. Dunstan's School, supposed to be in a village on the Hudson river. During an eventful school year, five close friends in the freshman class, and a teacher of the best sort, plan for a summer vacation in camp in Maine, and being encouraged in a fondness for that best of all exercises, walking, they adopt the name which gives the title to the book, and having gone to Boston by water, complete their journey on foot, with plenty of adventures along the way.

"The boys are active, fun-loving, friendly fellows, not averse to running risks, but always landing on their feet after a fall. Their adventures and experiences form the material of a good story, told with animation and an evident understanding of boy nature."—*The Christian Register.*

"The narrative is not only full of incident, but is written in a thoroughly entertaining fashion. We do not often come upon a boy's book so wholesome in tone and at the same time so admirably written."—*Boston Herald.*

CAMP ST. DUNSTAN



CAMP ST. DUNSTAN is a complete story in itself, although following the fortunes of the "Fearless Four" and their well-liked friend and teacher who as the "Crimson Ramblers" took an interesting trip, partly on foot, from their school near the Hudson river to a favorite camping ground in Maine. A typical summer camp for boys, with all its interesting routine, is described in connection with the story. Interesting new characters are introduced, a mystery develops, and every element of a good boy's story is present. Mr. Eldred, as is well known, is an authority on work with boys, including many summers of camping, and his characters are as interesting as his stories are clean and wholesome.

"Mr. Eldred knows how to tell an animated, wholesome story and no one will feel the least desire to skip a single one of his entertaining pages."—*Boston Transcript.*

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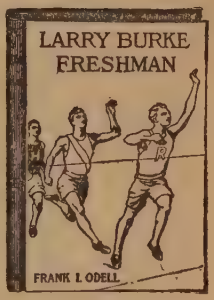
LARRY BURKE, FRESHMAN



THIS book bristles with activity: baseball, football, ice-hockey, basketball, track and field events, and a regatta appearing, and each sport brought in with expert accuracy of detail, and realism that makes one live over his own most thrilling athletic experiences. Along with this is a charming narrative of student life and comradeship—the golden days that have no others like them. Every boy and man who ever heard of a college can take delight in this book.

"The high tone of most of the boys, their comradeship and good will toward one another are felt through the whole book. And if ever a boy deserved friends or success, it was the noble-hearted hero of the story, Larry Burke."—*Louisville Courier-Journal.*

"A boys' book that is filled with healthy adventure and action from cover to cover."—*Cincinnati Times-Star.*

LARRY BURKE, SOPHOMORE

THE leading characters in this book develop along right lines and are worth knowing. Every place of the social and athletic side of a typical American college is entertainingly brought in, with the educational side not neglected, for Larry and his best friends are by no means at college simply to "make" the various teams or have a good time. Mr. Odell knows well how to present a picture of college life as the best type of students know it, and this story makes it easy for others to understand a college man's enthusiasm and loyalty.

"It is a capital story, and will make a strong appeal to the athletic young student."—*New Orleans Times-Democrat.*

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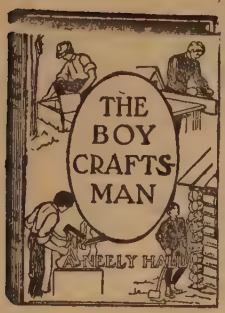
THE BOY CRAFTSMAN

Practical and Profitable Ideas for a Boy's Leisure Hours

By A. NEELY HALL



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EVERY real boy wishes to design and make things, but the questions of materials and tools are often hard to get around. Nearly all books on the subject call for a greater outlay of money than is within the means of many boys, or their parents wish to expend in such ways. In this book a number of chapters give suggestions for carrying on a small business that will bring a boy in money with which to buy tools and materials necessary for making apparatus and articles described in other chapters, while the ideas are so practical that many an industrious boy can learn what he is best fitted for in his life work. No work of its class is so completely up-to-date or so worthy in point of thoroughness and avoidance of danger. The drawings are profuse and excellent. and every feature of the book is first-class. It tells how to make a boy's workshop, how to handle tools, and what can be made with them; how to start a printing shop and conduct an amateur newspaper, how to make photographs, build a log cabin, a canvas canoe, a gymnasium, a miniature theatre, and many other things dear to the soul of youth.

We cannot imagine a more delightful present for a boy than this book. — *Churchman, N.Y.*

Every boy should have this book. It's a practical book — it gets right next to the boy's heart and stays there. He will have it near him all the time, and on every page there is a lesson or something that will stand the boy in good need. Beyond a doubt in its line this is one of the cleverest books on the market. — *Providence News.*

If a boy has any sort of a mechanical turn of mind, his parents should see that he has this book. — *Boston Journal.*

This is a book that will do boys good. — *Buffalo Express.*

The boy who will not find this book a mine of joy and profit must be queerly constituted. — *Pittsburgh Gazette.*

Will be a delight to the boy mechanic. — *Watchman, Boston.*

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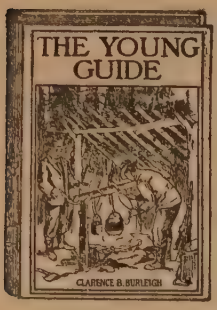

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NORMAN accompanies his father on a vacation trip to the deep woods in the "open" season. In addition to the natural excitement of hunting, further adventures are supplied by a band of undesirable citizens who steal deer left hanging in the woods and sell them to "yarding crews." Norman Carver, and friend, Fred Warner, who wins laurels as a guide, are instrumental in having some of these villains brought to justice.

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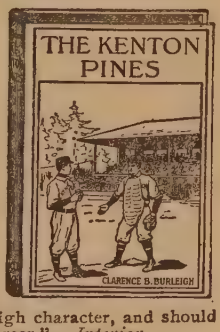

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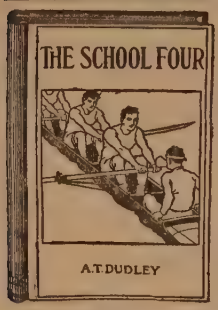
THE SCHOOL FOUR



THE events of the story centre in the Westcott School, one of three which have formed a new league. The leading forms of athletics, including rowing, figure in the gaining of points towards a championship cup, and the rivalry is most intense. At Westcott's, the crowning student honor is the captaincy of the school four, and the way in which the succession to the coveted position falls to the one best deserving it forms the climax. Football is no less prominent in the progress of the story than rowing, and both general school life and competitive relations with other schools are set forth to the life.

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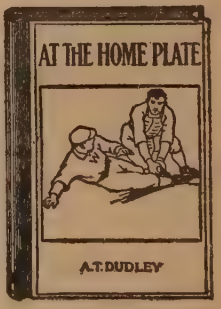
At the Home Plate



THE scene of this book is at a public school, "Newbury," which seeks to win a prize cup held by its rival, "Westcott's," the winner during the first year of the "Triangular League." This is hard to accomplish, and an important factor is a new student who had to overcome the handicap of being the brother of an unpopular teacher. There is good baseball in this book, but it is hardly more prominent than football and hockey.

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